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Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character

By DEAN RAMSAY

T. NELSON AND SONS
London, Edinburgh, Dublin, New York
Paris 61, rue des Saints Pères
Leipzig 35 37 Konigstrasse

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FIRST SERIES

REMINISCENCES OF SCOTTISH LIFE AND CHARACTER

INTRODUCTORY

THERE are many things connected with our Scottish manners of former times which are fast becoming obsolete. We seem at present to be placed in a juncture when some Scottish traditions may be lost entirely, if not preserved. Twice I have essayed to record certain 'Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character,' and have found the experiment most favourably received by my countrymen. The materials have grown under my hand; and I have received contributions from various quarters for a new edition; still I had hardly anticipated that a fresh supply of the Reminiscences would have been so soon called for. I have, however, endeavoured to meet the demand by a third issue of these traditions, in which many additional anecdotes will be found, and some specimens of Scottish PROVERBS, with remarks upon their use and meaning. I cannot but feel gratified that the public should so far have corroborated the opinion which I entertain regarding this phase of our Scottish peculiarities. I still think that it forms a most interesting chapter of our domestic national annals. In fact, if it were not presumption, I might be inclined to consider myself a fellow-labourer with Mr Robert Chambers; as in a very humble degree, and a very limited sphere, this little volume takes a portion of the same field of illustration which he has selected. I should consider myself to have done well if I shall direct any of my readers to

his able volumes. Whosoever wishes to know what this country really has been in times past, and to learn with a precision, beyond what is supplied by the narratives of history, the details of the ordinary current of our social, civil, and national life, must carefully study the Domestic Annals of Scotland. Never before were a nation's domestic features so thoroughly portrayed. Of those features the specimens of quaint Scottish humour still remembered are unlike anything else, but they are fast becoming obsolete, and my motive for this publication has been an endeavour to preserve marks of the past, which would of themselves soon become obliterated, and to supply the rising generation with pictures of social life, faded and indistinct to their eyes, but the strong lines of which an older race still remember. By thus coming forward at a favourable moment, no doubt many beautiful specimens of SCOTTISH MINSTRELSY have in this manner been preserved from oblivion by the timely exertions of Bishop Percy, Ritson, Walter Scott, and Professor Aytoun.

My esteemed friend, Lord Neaves, who, it is well known, combines, with his great legal knowledge and high literary acquirements, a keen sense of the humorous, has sometimes pleasantly complained of my drawing so many of my specimens of Scottish humour from sayings and doings of Scottish ministers. There can be no doubt that the older school of our national clergy supply some most amusing anecdotes. They were a shrewd and observant race. They lived amongst their own people from year to year, and knew well the Scottish type of character. Their retired habits and familiar intercourse with their parishioners, gave rise to many quaint and racy communications. They were excellent men, and well suited to their pastoral work, and did much good amongst the people; for it should be always remembered that a national church requires a sympathy and resemblance between the pastors and the flocks. Both will be found to change together. Nothing could be further from my mind, in recording these stories,

than the idea of casting ridicule upon such an order of men. My own feelings as a Scotchman, with all their ancestral associations, lead me to cherish their memory with pride and deep interest. I may appeal also to the fact that amongst my contributions to this volume, several are from known and distinguished clergymen of the Church of Scotland. Indeed, no persons enjoy these stories more than ministers themselves. I recollect many years ago travelling to Perth in the old stage-coach days, and enjoying the society of a Scottish clergyman, who was a most amusing companion, and full of stories, the quaint humour of which accorded with his own disposition. When we had come through Glen Farg, my companion pointed out that we were in the parish of Dron. With much humour he introduced an anecdote of a brother minister, not of a brilliant order of mind, who had terminated in this place a course of appointments in the Church, the names of which, at least, were of an ominous character for a person of unimaginative temperament. The worthy man had been brought up at the school of Dunse—had been made assistant at Dull, a parish near Aberfeldy, in the Presbytery of Weem—and had here ended his days and his clerical career as minister of Dron.

Sir Walter Scott, in the dedication to the King (George the Fourth) of his collected edition of the Waverley novels, views with much complacency the fact that 'the perusal of them has been supposed, in some instances, to have succeeded in amusing hours of relaxation, or relieving those of languor, pain, or anxiety.' No doubt it is a source of allowable satisfaction to an author to think that he has in any degree, even the lowest and most humble, contributed to the innocent recreation of a world where sorrow and distress so generally prevail. The preparation of this edition has sometimes succeeded in drawing off the mind of the author from sad and painful recollections of his own domestic trials, and he may perhaps be permitted to

state, that in several cases he has received assurance that these pages have beguiled an hour of languor and debility; that they have recalled many pleasant associations with the past, and have given a permanent and agreeable impression of a pleasantry and humour exclusively and essentially of a Scottish type and character.

I wish it to be distinctly understood that these desultory records were never intended to treat of the changes which have taken place in our country during the last half century, in literature or philosophy, in laws, commerce, manufactures, or in the deeper phases of our national character. I treat of changes and of transitions which lie rather upon the surface of social life. In fact, I speak of what, to a great degree, I can verify from my own experience, and what I have not seen and known in my own person I generally narrate from the direct testimony of others. I can myself go back in memory for fifty years; and therefore these observations, trivial and superficial as they may be, I might name, in imitation of my distinguished great-great-great-uncle, Bishop Burnett, and call them *Memoirs of my Own Time*, or, more correctly, to follow a recent example of collected reminiscences (that of the late lamented Lord Cockburn), *Memorials of my Time*. I have recorded the remarks following in the way of an *experiment*, hoping that it might form a precedent or example for others to take up the question of changes amongst us, and for those to state results of their observation who have had far more experience than I have (as I was only an occasional visitor to my own country from the age of eight to the age of thirty), who have more opportunities of judging, and who are possessed of far better powers of description. As Lord Cockburn has observed, 'A change has been going on for a long time.' 'The feelings and habits which had prevailed at the union, and which had left so many picturesque peculiarities on the Scottish character, could not survive the enlarged intercourse with England and the world.' Much of this change

had of course taken place before any of the present generation can remember. Much has been done in my own recollection, and now there remains only comparatively the slighter shades of difference to be assimilated, and soon there will be little to notice. Now, a subject like this can only be illustrated by a copious application of anecdotes which must show the features of the past. And let me premise that I make use of anecdotes, not for the purpose of telling a good story, but solely in the way of *illustration*. I shall not hesitate to bring forward the most hackneyed old stories if they serve this purpose. Neither shall I have any delicacy in bringing forward anecdotes drawn from my own knowledge, or any scruple in making use of sayings and doings which may come from my own nearest relatives, from the dearest and most valued of friends. If these anecdotes should occasionally excite amusement, or even laughter, there is no harm done; but let it be remembered this is not the *object*. The object, as I say, is to show the changes referred to. Whatever, in short, illustrates our changes, and marks the times that are gone, I shall not hesitate to use. If it come from a friend, it will not be less acceptable, nor shall I have any compunction in adopting it, as I trust I shall not have to make use of any anecdotes which I should be unwilling those friends themselves should hear repeated.

We have now, therefore, to deal with common events and with changes which, though in themselves often deep and important, yet appear to the observer to affect only what is external; and as we must have some classification or arrangement of the subjects on which these changes are to be marked, I would propose to record some Reminiscences on the following subjects:

I. On religious feelings and religious observances.
II. On old Scottish conviviality.
III. On the old Scottish domestic servant.
IV. On Scottish language, including Scottish proverbs.
V. On Scottish stories of wit and humour.

CHAPTER I

ON RELIGIOUS FEELINGS AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

On such a subject as our first head, I wish to speak with deference and circumspection. This is not a fitting occasion for entering upon the question of national religious feeling, or of the modifications which have taken place in the public mind on its great and important questions. It is impossible, however, to overlook entirely the fact of a gradual softening and relaxation which has been going on for some years, of the stern rigours of the Calvinistic school of theology. At any rate, its theoretic peculiarities are certainly kept in the background. What we have to notice, however, are those changes in the feelings with regard to religion and religious observances, which have appeared upon the exterior of society—the changes which belong to outward habits rather than to internal feelings. Of such changes many have taken place within my own experience. Scotland has ever borne the character of a moral and religious country; and the mass of the people are a more church-going race than the masses of English population. I am not at all prepared to say that in the middle and lower ranks of life, our countrymen have undergone much change in regard to religious observances. But there can be no question that amongst the upper classes there are manifestations connected with religion now, which some years ago were not thought of. The attendance of men on public worship is of itself an example of the change we speak of. 'I am afraid that when Walter Scott described Monkbarns as with difficulty 'hounded out' to hear the sermons of good Mr Blattergowl, he wrote from practice gener-

ally prevalent amongst Scottish lairds. The late Bishop Sandford told me that when he first came to Edinburgh —I suppose fifty years ago—few gentlemen attended church—very few indeed were seen at the communion —so much so that it was a matter of conversation when a male communicant, not an aged man, was observed at the table for the first time. Sydney Smith, when preaching in Edinburgh some forty years ago, seeing how almost exclusively congregations were made up of ladies, took for his text the verse from the Psalms, 'Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord;' and with that touch of the facetious which marked everything he did, laid the emphasis on the word 'men.' Looking round the congregation and saying 'Oh that *men* would therefore praise the Lord,' implying that he used the word, not to describe the human species generally, but the male individuals as distinguished from the female portion. In the matter of such attendances by young men, a marked change has taken place in my own experience. In fact, there is an attention excited towards church subjects, which thirty years ago would have been hardly credited. Nor is it only in connection with churches and church services that these changes have been brought forth, but an interest has been raised on the subject from Bible societies, missionary associations at home and abroad, schools and reformatory institutions, most of which, for really active purposes, have grown up during fifty years. Nor should I omit to mention, what I trust may be considered as a change belonging to religious feeling, viz., that conversation is now conducted without that accompaniment of absurd and unmeaning oaths which was really once considered an essential embellishment of genteel discourse. I distinctly recollect an elderly gentleman, when describing the opinion of a refined and polished female upon a particular point, putting into her mouth an unmistakable round oath as the natural language in which people's sentiments and opinions would be ordinarily conveyed.

This is a change wrought in men's feelings, which all must hail with great pleasure. Putting out of sight for a moment the sin of such a practice, and the bad influence it must have had upon all emotions of reverence for the name and attributes of the Divine Being, and the natural effect of profane swearing, 'to harden a' within,' we might marvel at the utter folly and incongruity of making the practice an expression of anger, of surprise, or often as expletive in common discourse. A quaint anecdote, descriptive of such senseless ebullition, I have from a friend who mentioned the names of parties concerned: A late Duke of Athol had invited a well-known character, a writer of Perth, to come up and meet him at Dunkeld for the transaction of some business. The Duke mentioned the day and hour when he should receive the man of law, who accordingly came punctually at the appointed time and place. But the Duke had forgotten the appointment, and gone to the hill, from which he could not return for some hours. A highlander present described the Perth writer's indignation, and his mode of showing it, by a most elaborate course of swearing. 'But who did he swear at?' was the inquiry made of the narrator, who replied, 'Ou he didna sweer at ony thing parteecular, but juist stude in ta middle of ta road and swoor at lairge.'

This is the place to notice changes which have taken place in regard to the questions of taste in the building and embellishing Scottish places of worship generally. Some years back there was a great jealousy of ornament in connection with churches and church services, and, in fact, all such embellishments were considered as marks of a departure from the simplicity of old Scottish worship—they were distinctive of Episcopacy as opposed to the severer modes of Presbyterianism. The late Sir William Forbes used to give an account of a conversation, indicative of this feeling, which he had overheard between an Edinburgh inhabitant and his friend from the country. They were passing St. John's,

which had just been finished, and the countryman asked, 'Whatna kirk was that?' 'Oh,' said the townsman, 'that is an English chapel,' meaning Episcopalian. 'Aye,' said his friend, 'there'll be walth o' images there.' But if unable to sympathize with architectural church ornament and embellishment, how much less could they sympathize with the performance of divine service, which included such musical accompaniments as intoning, chanting, and anthems? On the first introduction of Tractarianism into Scotland, the full choir service had been established in an Episcopal church, where a noble family had adopted those views, and carried them out regardless of expense. The lady who had been instrumental in getting up these musical services was very anxious that an old nurse of the family—a Presbyterian of the old school—should have an opportunity of hearing them; accordingly, she very kindly took her down to church in the carriage, and on returning asked her what she thought of the music, etc.: 'Ou, it's varra bonny, varra bonny. But oh, my lady, it's an awfu' way of spending the Sabbath.' The good woman could only look upon the whole thing as a musical performance. The organ was a great mark of distinction between Episcopalian and Presbyterian places of worship. I have heard of an old lady describing an Episcopalian clergyman, without any idea of disrespect, in these terms: 'Oh, he is a whistle kirk minister.' Of late years, however, a spirit of greater tolerance of such things has been growing up amongst us—a greater tolerance, I suspect, even of organs and liturgies. In fact, we may say a new era has begun in Scotland as to church architecture and church ornaments. The use of stained glass and the restoration of ancient edifices indicate a revolution of feeling regarding this question. Beautiful and expensive churches are rising everywhere, and belonging to all denominations. It is not long since the building or repairing a new church, or the preparing and adapting an old

church, implied in Scotland simply a production of the greatest possible degree of ugliness and bad taste at the least possible expense, and certainly never included any notion of ornament in the details. Now, large sums are expended on places of worship without reference to creed. First-rate architects are employed. Fine Gothic structures are produced. The rebuilding of the Grey-friars' Church, the restoration of South Leith Church and of Glasgow Cathedral, mark the spirit of the times. One might hope that changes such as these in the feelings, tastes, and associations, would have a beneficial effect in bringing the worshippers themselves into a more general spirit of forbearance with each other. A friend of mine used to tell a story of an honest builder's views of church differences, which was very amusing, and quaintly professional. An English gentleman, who had arrived in a Scottish country town, was walking about to examine the various objects which presented themselves, observed two rather handsome places of worship in course of erection nearly opposite to each other. He addressed a person, who happened to be the contractor for the chapels, and asked, 'What was the difference between these two places of worship which were springing up so close to each other?' meaning, of course, the difference of the theological tenets of the two congregations. The contractor, who thought only of architectural differences, innocently replied, 'There may be a difference of sax feet in length, but there's no aboon a few inches in the breadth.' Would that all our religious differences could be brought within so narrow a compass.

It might be a curious question to consider how far motives founded on mere taste or sentiment may have operated in creating an interest towards religion, and in making it a more prominent and popular question than it was in the early portion of the present century. We have had in this country two causes which have combined in producing these effects: 1st. The great

disruption which took place in the Church of Scotland no doubt called forth an attention to the subject which stirred up the public, and made religion at any rate a topic of deep interest for discussion and for partizanship. Men's minds are not allowed to remain in the torpid condition of a past generation. 2nd. The æsthetic movement in religion, which some years since was made in England, has of course had its influence in Scotland, and many who showed little concern about religion whilst it was merely a question of doctrines, of precepts, and of worship, threw themselves keenly into the question when it became associated with ceremonial, and music, and high art. New ecclesiastical associations have been presented to Scottish tastes and feelings. With some minds, attachment to the church is attachment to her Gregorian tones, jewelled chalices, lighted candles, embroidered altar-cloths, silver crosses, processions, copes, albs, and chasubles. But from whatever cause it proceeds, a great change has taken place in the general interest excited towards ecclesiastical questions. Religion now has increased associations with the ordinary current of human life. In times past it was kept more as a thing apart. There was a false delicacy which made people shrink from encountering appellations that were usually bestowed upon those who made a more prominent appearance than the world at large, in regard to a religious profession. A great change has taken place in this respect with persons of *all* shades of religious opinion. With an increased attention to the *externals* of religion, we believe that in many points the heart is more exercised also. Take, as an example, the practice of family prayer. Many excellent and pious households of the former generation would not venture upon the observance, I am afraid, because they were in dread of the sneer. There was a foolish application of the terms Methodist, saints, over-righteous, and so on, where the practice was observed. It was to take up a rather decided position in the neighbourhood,

and I can testify that, less than fifty years ago, a family would have been marked and talked of for a usage of which now throughout the country the *exception* is rather the unusual circumstance. A little anecdcte from recollections in my own family will furnish a good illustration of a state of feeling on this point now happ.ly unknown. In a northern town of the east coast, where the earliest recollections of my life go back, there was usually a detachment of a regiment who were kindly received and welcomed to the society, which in the winter months was very full and very gay. There was the usual measure of dining, dancing, supping, card-playing, and gossiping which prevailed in country towns at the time. The officers were of course an object of much interest to the natives, and their habits were much discussed. A friend was staying in the family who partook a good deal of the Athenian temperament, viz., a delight in hearing and telling some new thing. On one occasion she burst forth in great excitement with the intelligence that 'Sir Nathaniel Duckinfield, the officer in command of the detachment, had family prayers every morning!' A very near and dear relative of mine, knowing the tendency of the lady to gossip, pulled her up with the exclamation: 'How can you repeat such things, Miss Ogilvy; nothing in the world but the ill-natured stories of Montrose!!' The remark was made quite innocently and unconsciously of the bitter satire it conveyed upon the feeling of the place. The 'ill-nature' of these stories was true enough, because ill-nature was the motive of those who raised them; not because it is an ill-natured thing of itself to say of a family that they had household prayers, but the ill-nature consisted in their intending to throw out a sneer and sarcasm upon a subject where all such reflections are unbecoming and indecorous. It is one of the best proofs of change of habits and associations on this matter, that the anecdote, exquisite as it is for our purpose, will hardly be understood by many of

our young friends, or, at least, happily has lost much of its force and pungency.

These remarks apply to the state of religious feeling amongst the upper classes of society. I am not aware of much change in the religious habits of the Scottish peasantry—perhaps the elders have yielded something from the sternness of David Deans. But, as compared with the corresponding class in England, there are many circumstances to distinguish the theological tenets and strict observance of religious ordinances of the Scottish from the usual feelings of the English peasant. A friend has informed me that the late Lord Rutherfurd often told with much interest of a rebuke which he received from a shepherd, near Bonaly, amongst the Pentlands. He had entered into conversation with him, and was complaining bitterly of the weather, which prevented him enjoying his visit to the country, and said hastily and unguardedly: 'What a d——d mist!' and then expressed his wonder how or for what purpose there should have been such a thing created as east wind. The shepherd, a tall, grim figure, turned sharp round upon him. 'What ails you at the mist, sir; it wats the grass, and slockens the ewes,' adding, with much solemnity, 'It's God's wull;' and turned away with lofty indignation. Lord Rutherfurd used to repeat this with much candour as a fine specimen of rebuke from a sincere and simple mind. Something like this is reported of an eminent professor of geology, who, visiting in the Highlands, met an old man on the hills on Sunday morning. The professor, partly from the effect of habit, and not adverting to the very strict notions on Sabbath desecration entertained in Ross-shire, had his pocket-hammer in hand, and was thoughtlessly breaking the specimens of minerals he picked up by the way. The old man for some time eyed the geologist, and going up to him, quietly said, 'Sir, ye're breaking something there forbye the stanes!' A still stricter view of Sabbath desecration is recorded as being suggested to

an English traveller by a Scottish peasant: An English artist travelling professionally through Scotland had occasion to remain over Sunday in a small town in the north. To while away the time, he walked out a short way in the environs, where the picturesque ruin of a castle met his eye. He asked a countryman who was passing to be so good as tell him the name of the castle. The reply was somewhat startling: 'It's no the day to be speering sic things!' The Scottish peasantry of the older school were extremely jealous of any minister who departed from their high standard of orthodox divinity, by selecting subjects which involved discussions of strictly moral or practical questions. A worthy old clergyman having, upon the occasion of a communion Monday, taken a text of such a character, was thus commented on by an ancient dame of the congregation, who was previously acquainted with his style of discourse: 'Il there's an ill text in a' the Bible, that creetur's aye sure to tak it.'

The feelings on such subjects entertained by the inhabitants of our crowded cities, wynds, and closes, are no criterion of the national religious character. It is a great difficulty to get them to attend Divine worship at all, as many circumstances combine to break off all the associations with public services. A lady, who is most active in that department, gives me an amusing instance of self-complacency arising from such attendance. She was visiting in the West Port, not far from the church established by my illustrious friend Dr Chalmers. Having asked a poor woman if she ever attended it for Divine service, 'Ou ay,' she replied; 'there's a man ca'd Chalmers preaches there, and I whiles gang in and hear him, just to encourage him, puir body!'

From the religious opinions of a people, the transition is natural to their political partialities. One great political change has passed over Scotland, which none now living can hardly be said to have actually wit-

nessed; but they remember those who were contemporaries of the anxious scenes of '45, and many of us have known determined and thorough Jacobites. The poetry of that political period still remains, and we hear but as pleasant songs those words and melodies which stirred the hearts and excited the deep enthusiasm of a past generation. But Jacobite anecdotes are fading from our knowledge. To many young persons they are unknown. Of these stories illustrative of Jacobite feelings and enthusiasm, many are of a character not fit for me to record. The good old ladies who were violent partisans of the Stuarts had little hesitation in referring without reserve to the future and eternal destiny of William of Orange. One anecdote I had from a near relative of the family may be adduced in illustration of the powerful hold which the cause had upon the views and consciences of Jacobites. A former Mr Stirling of Keir had favoured the Stuart cause, and had in fact attended a muster of forces at the Brig of Turk in the year 1708. This symptom of a rising against the government occasioned much attention, and the authorities were very active in their endeavours to discover who were the leaders of the movement. Keir was suspected. The miller of Keir was brought forward as a witness, and swore positively that the Laird was *not* present. Now, as it was well known that he was there, and that the miller knew it, a neighbour asked him privately, when he came out of the witness-box, how he could on oath assert such a falsehood. The miller replied, quite undaunted, and with a feeling of confidence in the righteousness of his cause approaching the sublime—'I would rather trust my soul to God's mercy than trust Keir's head into their hands.'

CHAPTER II

ON OLD SCOTTISH CONVIVIALITY

THE next change in manners which has been effected in the memory of many now living, is in the habits of conviviality, or, to speak more plainly, in the banishment of drunkenness from genteel society. It is indeed a most important and a blessed change. But it is a change of which many persons have little notion. It is hardly possible to realize the scenes which took place in society within fifty years back. In many houses, when a party dined, the ladies going away was the signal for the commencement of a system of compulsory conviviality. No one was allowed to shirk—no daylight—no heeltaps—was the wretched jargon in which was expressed the propriety and the duty of seeing that the glass, when filled, must be emptied and drained. We have heard of glasses having the bottoms knocked off, so that no shuffling tricks might be played with them, and that they could only be put down—empty. Such scenes must have been most revolting to sober persons who were unaccustomed to extreme conviviality. As in the case of a drinking Angus laird, entertaining for his guest a London merchant of formal manners and temperate habits. The poor man was driven from the table when the drinking set in hard, and stole away to take refuge in his bedroom. The company, however, were determined not to let the worthy citizen off so easily, but proceeded in a body, with the laird at their head, and invaded his privacy, by exhibiting bottles and glasses at his bed-side. Losing all patience, the wretched victim gasped out his indignation: 'Sir, your hospitality borders upon brutality.' It must have had

a fatal influence on many characters not strong-minded enough to resist the temptations to excess. Poor James Boswell, who certainly required no *extraordinary* urging to take a glass too much, is found, in the recent letters which have just come to light, laying the blame of excesses of his to 'falling into a habit which still prevails in Scotland;' and then he remarks, with censorious emphasis, on the 'drunken manners of his countrymen.' This was about 1770. In my part of the country the traditionary stories of drinking prowess are quite marvellous. On Deeside there flourished a certain Saunders Paul, an innkeeper at Banchory (whom I remember an old man). He was said to have drunk whisky, glass for glass, to the claret of Mr Maule and the Laird of Skene for a whole evening; and in those days there was a traditional story of his despatching, at one sitting, in company with a celebrated character for conviviality —one of the men employed to float rafts of timber down the Dee—three dozen of porter. Of this Mr Paul, it was recorded that on being asked if he considered porter as a wholesome beverage, he replied, 'Oh yes, if you don't take above a dozen.' Saunders Paul was, as I have said, the innkeeper at Banchory; his friend and porter companion was drowned in the Dee, and when told that the body had been found down the stream below Crathes, he coolly remarked, 'I am surprised at that, for I never kenn'd him pass the inn before without comin' in for a glass.'

There was a sort of infatuation in the supposed dignity and manliness attached to powers of deep potation. A positive *éclat* was attached to the accomplished and well-trained consumer of claret or of whisky toddy, which gave an importance and even merit to the practice of drinking, which had a most injurious effect. I am afraid some of the Pleydels of the old school would have looked with the most ineffable contempt on the present degeneracy in this respect, and that the temperance movement would be little short of insanity in their eyes;

and this leads me to a remark.—In considering this portion of our subject, we should bear in mind a distinction. The change we now speak of involves more than a mere change of a custom or practice in social life. It is a change in men's sentiments and feelings on a certain great question of morals. Except we enter into this distinction, we cannot appreciate the extent of the change which has really taken place in regard to intemperate habits. I have an anecdote from a descendant of Principal Robertson, of an address made to him, which showed the real importance attached to all that concerned the system of drinking in his day. The Principal had been invited to spend some days in a country house, and the minister of the parish (a jovial character) had been asked to meet him. Before dinner he went up to Dr Robertson and addressed him confidentially: 'Doctor, I understand ye are brother of my gude freend Peter Robertson of Edinburgh, therefore I'll gie ye a piece of advice,—Bend[1] well to the Madeira at dinner, for here ye'll get little o't after.' I have known persons who held that a man who could not drink must have a degree of feebleness and imbecility of character. But as this is an important point, I will adduce the higher authority of Lord Cockburn, and quote from him two examples, very different certainly in their nature, but both bearing upon the question. I refer to what he says of Lord Hermand: 'With Hermand drinking was a virtue; he had a sincere respect for drinking, indeed a high moral approbation, and a serious compassion for the poor wretches who *could* not indulge in it, and with due contempt of those who could but did not;' and secondly, I refer to Lord C.'s pages for an anecdote which illustrates the perverted feeling I refer to, now happily no longer existing. It relates the opinion expressed by an old drunken writer of Selkirk (whose name is not mentioned) regarding his anticipation of professional success for Mr Cranstoun, afterwards Lord

[1] Old Scotch for drink hard.

Corehouse. Sir Walter Scott, William Erskine, and Cranstoun had dined with this Selkirk writer, and Scott, of hardy, strong, and healthy frame, had matched the writer himself in the matter of whisky punch. Poor Cranstoun, of refined and delicate mental and bodily temperament, was a bad hand at such work, and was soon off the field. On the party breaking up, the Selkirk writer expressed his admiration of Scott, assuring him that *he* would rise high in the profession, and adding, 'I'll tell ye what, Maister Walter, that lad Cranstoun may get to the tap o' the bar, if he can; but tak my word for 't, it's no be by drinking.' A legal friend has told me of a celebrated circuit where Lord Hermand was judge, and Clephane depute advocate. The party got drunk at Ayr, and so continued (although quite able for their work) till the business was concluded at Jedburgh. Some years after, my informant heard that this circuit had, at Jedburgh, acquired the permanent name of the '*daft* circuit.' Lord Cockburn was fond of describing a circuit scene at Stirling, in his early days at the bar, under the presidency of his friend and connection Lord Hermand. After the circuit dinner, and when drinking had gone on for some time, young Cockburn observed places becoming vacant in the social circle, but no one going out at the door. He found that the individuals had dropt down under the table. He took the hint, and by this ruse retired from the scene. He lay quiet till the beams of the morning sun penetrated the apartment. The judge and some of his stanch friends coolly walked upstairs, washed their hands and faces, came down to breakfast, and went into court quite fresh and fit for work. The feeling of importance frequently attached to powers of drinking was formally attested by a well-known western baronet of convivial habits and convivial memory. He was desirous of bearing testimony to the probity, honour, and other high moral qualities of a friend whom he desired to commend. Having fully stated these claims to con-

sideration and respect, he deemed it proper to notice also his convivial attainments; he added accordingly with cautious approval on so important a point, 'and he is a fair drinker.'

I am indebted to the kindness of Mr W. Chambers for the following graphic illustration of the scenes which the drunken habits of the time must often have exhibited in social life: In these bygone days, Peebles-shire had its due proportion of 'drunken lairds,' who, besides over-indulging in their own and their neighbours' houses, very frequently spent a night weekly in the chief inn in the country town on the occasion of attending market. Their return home on horseback, in the dull grey mornings after these coarse convivialities in Peebles, required considerable tact, as the roads were far from being good, and, in some places, went along unguarded precipitous banks overhanging the Tweed. There was a particularly bad bit of road between Peebles and Innerleithen. Here the river makes a sudden turn at the foot of a steep bank, and forms a deep dark pool called 'the dirt-pot.' Now, it happened that a certain old laird had to pass this trying spot on his way home when more than half tipsy; and it seems that, on one occasion, he had been mortally affronted by some one alleging, by way of joke, 'that he was afraid to pass the dirt-pot.' This affront stuck to the laird. While sober, the recollection of it appeared to be in abeyance, but it always came back with full force when he reached a point of inebriety, and that was every night. Reaching this unhappy crisis, he broke out in an intolerably quarrelsome humour, muttering invectives on the subject which oppressed his mind: 'Who says I am afraid to pass the dirt-pot? I say, show me the man that tells me I am afraid to pass the dirt-pot;' and so on he would have gone till he became perfectly outrageous. But there was an understanding in the house about what was to be done on these occasions. No sooner had the ominous words 'dirt-pot' escaped the laird's

lips, than the lady, his wife, quietly touched the bell. A servant entered the room, and, slipping behind the laird, seized hold of him in her arms, and dragged him off to bed—the poor laird being heard all the way mumbling disjointed imprecations against all who dared to say he was afraid to pass the dirt-pot!

Strangely enough—indeed, most strange of all—the lady who had this unpleasant duty to perform, actually took pains to cultivate habits of drinking in her sons. An accomplished and wealthy gentlewoman, she had, nevertheless, the common notion that drinking was part of the necessary business of life, and that all young men should be accustomed to carry liquor discreetly. Accordingly, she daily put before the young laird a certain quantity of wine which he was obliged to drink, whether he liked it or not. This reminds us of similar practices half a century ago in Ireland, when fathers used to tell their sons 'to make their head while they were young!'

In the Highlands this sort of feeling extended to an almost incredible extent, even so much as to obscure the moral and religious sentiments. Of this a striking proof was afforded in a circumstance which took place in my own church soon after I came into it. One of our Gaelic clergy had so far forgotten himself as to appear in the church somewhat the worse of liquor. This having happened so often as to come to the ears of the Bishop, he suspended him from the performance of divine service. Against this decision the people were a little disposed to rebel, because, according to their Highland notions, 'a gentleman was no the waur for being able to tak a gude glass of whisky.' These were the notions of a people in whose eyes the power of swallowing whisky conferred distinction, and with whom inability to take the fitting quantity was a mark of a mean and futile character. Sad to tell, the funeral rites of Highland chieftains were not supposed to have been duly celebrated except there was an immoderate

and often fatal consumption of whisky. It has been related that at the last funeral in the Highlands, conducted according to the traditions of the olden times, several of the guests fell victims to the usage, and actually died of the excesses. Scenes of a most incongruous and extraordinary nature are still traditionally connected with such occasions. Within the last thirty years, a laird of Dundonald, a small estate in Rossshire, died at Inverness. There was open house, therefore, for a few days, and great eating and drinking. Here the corpse commenced its progress towards its appointed home on the coast, and people followed in multitudes to give it a partial convoy, all of whom had to be entertained. It took altogether a fortnight to bury poor Dundonald, and the expense must have been heavy. This, however, is looked back to at Inverness as the last of the real grand old Highland funerals. Such notions of what is due to the memory of the departed have now become unusual if not obsolete. I myself witnessed the first great instance of a change in this matter. I officiated at the funeral of the late Duke of Sutherland. The procession was a mile long. Refreshments were provided for 7,000 persons; beef, bread, and beer, but not one glass of whisky was allowed on the property that day! It may, perhaps, be said that the change we speak of is not peculiar to Scotland; that in England the same change has been apparent, and that drunkenness has passed away in the higher circles, as a matter of course, as refinement and taste made an advancement in society. This is true. But there were some features of the question which were peculiar to Scotland, and which at one time rendered it less probable that intemperance would give way in the north. It seemed in some quarters to have taken deeper root amongst us. The system of pressing, both in eating and drinking, seemed more inveterate. Nothing can more powerfully illustrate the deep-rooted character of intemperate habits in families than an anecdote which

was related to me, as coming from the late Mr Mackenzie, author of *The Man of Feeling*. He had been involved in a regular drinking party. He was keeping as free from the usual excesses as he was able, and as he marked companions around him falling victims to the power of drink, he himself dropped off under the table among the slain, as a measure of precaution, and lying there, his attention was called to a small pair of hands working at his throat; on asking what it was, a voice replied, 'Sir, I'm the lad that's to louse the neckcloths.' Here, then, was a family where, on drinking occasions, it was the appointed duty of one of the household to attend, and when the guests were becoming helpless, to untie their cravats in fear of apoplexy or suffocation. We ought certainly to be grateful for the change which has taken place from such a system; for this change has made a great revolution in Scottish social life. The charm and the romance long attached in the minds of some of our countrymen to the whole system and concerns of hard drinking was indeed most lamentable and absurd. At tavern suppers, where, nine times out of ten, it was the express *object* of those who went to get drunk, such stuff as 'regal purple stream,' 'rosy wine,' 'quaffing the goblet,' 'bright sparkling nectar,' 'chasing the rosy hours,' and so on, tended to keep up the delusion, and make it a monstrous fine thing for men to sit up drinking half the night, to have frightful headaches all next day, to make maudlin idiots of themselves as they went home, and to become brutes amongst their family when they got home. The favourable reaction which has taken place in regard to acts of intemperance may very fairly, in the first place, be referred to an improved moral feeling. But other causes have also assisted; and it is curious to observe how the different changes in the modes of society bear upon one another. The alteration in the convivial habits which we are noticing in our own country may be partly due to alteration of hours. The old plan of early dining

favoured a system of suppers, and after supper was a great time for convivial songs and sentiments. This of course induced drinking to a late hour. Most drinking songs imply the night as the season of conviviality—thus in a popular madrigal:

> By the gaily circling glass
> We can tell how minutes pass,
> By the hollow cask we are told
> How the waning *night* grows old.

And Burns thus marks the time:

> It is the moon, I ken her horn,
> That's blinkin in the lift sae hie:
> She shines sae bright, to wyle us hame,
> But by my sooth she'll wait a wee.

The young people of the present day have no idea of the state of matters in regard to the supper system when it was the normal condition of society. The late dining hours may make the social circle more formal, but they have been far less favourable to drinking propensities. After such dinners as ours are now, suppers are clearly out of the question. One is astonished to look back and recall the scenes to which were attached associations of hilarity, conviviality, and enjoyment. Drinking parties were protracted beyond the whole Sunday, having begun by a dinner on Saturday; imbecility and prostrate helplessness were a common result of these bright and jovial scenes; and by what perversion of language, or by what obliquity of sentiment, the notions of pleasure could be attached to scenes of such excess, to the nausea, the disgust of sated appetite, and the racking headache—it is not easy to explain. There were men of heads so hard, and of stomachs so insensible, that, like my friend Saunders Paul, they could stand anything in the way of drink. But to men in general, and to the more delicate constitutions, such a life must have been a cause of great misery. To a certain extent, and up to a certain point, wine may be a refreshment

and a wholesome stimulant; nay, it is a medicine, and a valuable one, and as such, comes recommended on fitting occasions by the physician. *Beyond* this point, as sanctioned and approved by nature, the use of wine is only degradation. Well did the sacred writer call wine, when thus taken in excess, 'a mocker.' It makes all men equal, because it makes them all idiotic. It allures them into a vicious indulgence, and then mocks their folly by depriving them of any sense they may ever have possessed.

It does not appear that at this time a similar excess in *eating* accompanied this prevalent tendency to excess in drinking. Scottish tables were at that period plain and abundant, but epicurism or gluttony do not seem to have been handmaids to drunkenness. A humorous anecdote, however, of a full-eating laird, may well accompany those which appertain to the drinking lairds. —A lady in the north having watched the proceedings of a guest, who ate long and largely, she ordered the servant to take away, as he had at last laid down, his knife and fork. To her surprise, however, he resumed his work, and she apologized to him, saying 'I thought, Mr ——, you had done.' 'Oh, so I had, mem; but I just fan' a doo in the *redd* o' my plate.' He had discovered a pigeon lurking amongst the bones and refuse of his plate, and could not resist finishing it.

CHAPTER III

ON THE OLD SCOTTISH DOMESTIC SERVANT

WE come now to a subject on which a great change has taken place in this country during my own experience. I allude to the third division which we proposed of these desultory remarks, viz., those peculiarities of intercourse which some years back marked the connection between masters and servants. In many Scottish houses a great familiarity prevailed between members of the family and the domestics. For this many reasons might have been assigned. Indeed, when we consider the simple modes of life which discarded the ideas of ceremony or etiquette, the retired and uniform style of living which afforded few opportunities for break or change in the domestic arrangements, and when we add to these a free, unrestrained, unformal, and natural style of intercommunion, which seems rather a national characteristic, we need not be surprised to find in quiet Scottish families a sort of intercourse with old domestics which can hardly be looked for now, when habits are changing so fast, and where much of the quiet eccentricity belonging to us as a national characteristic is almost necessarily softened down or driven out. Many circumstances thus conspired to promote familiarity with old domestics which are now entirely changed. We take the case of a middle-aged servant, or a young servant passing year after year in a family. The servant grows up into old age and confirmed habits when the laird is becoming a man, a husband, father of a family. The domestic cannot forget the days when his master was a child, riding on his back, applying to him for help in difficulties about his fishing, his rabbits, his pony, his going to school. All

the family know how attached he is; nobody likes to speak cross to him. He is a privileged man. The faithful old servant of thirty, forty, or fifty years, if with a tendency to be jealous, cross, and interfering, becomes a great nuisance. Still the relative position was the result of good feelings. If the familiarity sometimes became a nuisance, it was a wholesome nuisance, and relic of a simpler time gone by. But the case of the old servant, whether agreeable or troublesome, was often so fixed and established in the households of past days, that there was scarce a possibility of getting away from it. The well-known story of the answer of one of these domestic tyrants to the irritated master, who was making an effort to free himself from the thraldom, shows the idea entertained by *one* of the parties, at least, of the permanency of the tenure. I am assured by a friend that the true edition of the story was this—An old Mr Erskine of Dun had one of these old retainers, under whose language and unreasonable assumption he had long groaned. He had almost determined to bear it no longer, when, walking out with his man, on crossing a field, the master exclaimed, 'There's a hare.' Andrew looked at the place, and coolly replied, 'What a big lee, it's a cauff.' The master, quite angry now, plainly told the old domestic that they *must* part. But the tried servant of forty years, not dreaming of the possibility of *his* dismissal, innocently asked, 'Ay, sir; whare ye gaun? I'm sure ye're aye best at hame;' supposing that, if there were to be any disruption, it must be the master who would change the place. An example of a similar fixedness of tenure in an old servant was afforded in an anecdote related of an old coachman long in the service of a noble lady, and who gave all the trouble and annoyance which he conceived were the privileges of his position in the family. At last the lady fairly gave him notice to quit, and told him he must go. The only satisfaction she got was the quiet answer, 'Na, na, my lady; I druve ye to your marriage, and

I shall stay to drive ye to your burial.' It is but fair, however, to give an anecdote in which the master and the servant's position was *reversed*, in regard to the wish for change: An old servant of a relative of my own, with an ungovernable temper, became at last so weary of his master's irascibility, that he declared he must leave, and gave as his reason the fits of anger which came on and produced such great annoyance that he could not stand it any longer. His master, unwilling to lose him, tried to coax him by reminding him that the anger was soon off. 'Ay,' replied the other very shrewdly, 'but it's nae suner aff than it's on again.' I remember well an old servant of the old school, who had been fifty years domesticated in a family. Indeed I well remember the celebration of the half-century service completed. There were rich scenes with Sandy and his mistress. Let me recall you both to memory. Let me think of you, the kind, generous, warm-hearted mistress. A gentlewoman by descent and by feeling. A true friend, a sincere Christian; and let me think, too, of you, Sandy, an honest, faithful, and attached member of the family. For you were in that house rather as an humble friend than a servant. But out of this fifty years of attached service there sprung a sort of domestic relation and freedom of intercourse which would surprise people in these days. And yet Sandy knew his place. Like Corporal Trim, who, although so familiar and admitted to so much familiarity with my Uncle Toby, never failed in the respectful address—never forgot to say 'your honour.' At a dinner party Sandy was very active about changing his mistress's plate, and whipped it off when he saw that she had got a piece of rich pattee upon it. His mistress not liking such rapid movements, and at the same time knowing that remonstrance was in vain, exclaimed 'Hout, Sandy, I'm no dune,' and dabbed her fork into the pattee as it disappeared, to rescue a morsel. I remember her praise of English mutton was a great annoyance to the Scottish

prejudices of Sandy. One day she was telling me of a triumph Sandy had upon that subject. The smell of the joint roasting had become very offensive through the house. The lady called out to Sandy to have the doors closed, and adding 'that must be some horrid Scotch mutton you have got.' To Sandy's delight this was a leg of English mutton his mistress had expressly chosen, and, as she significantly told me, 'Sandy never let that down upon me.'

On Deeside there existed, in my recollection, besides the Saunders Paul I have alluded to, a number of extraordinary acute and humorous Scottish characters amongst the lower classes. The native gentry enjoyed their humour, and hence arose a familiarity of intercourse which called forth many amusing scenes and quaint rejoinders. A celebrated character of this description bore the sobriquet of 'Boaty.' He had acted as Charon of the Dee at Banchory, and passed the boat over the river before there was a bridge. Boaty had many curious sayings recorded of him. When speaking of the gentry around, he characterized them according to their occupations and activity of habits—thus, 'As to Mr Russell of Blackha', he just works himsell like a paid labourer; Mr Duncan's a' the day fish, fish; but Sir Robert's a perfect gentleman; he does naething, naething.' Boaty was a first-rate salmon-fisher himself, and was much sought after by amateurs who came to Banchory for the sake of the sport afforded by the beautiful Dee. He was, perhaps, a little spoiled, and presumed upon the indulgence and familiarity shewn to him in the way of his craft—as, for example, he was in attendance with his boat on a sportsman who was both skilful and successful, for he caught salmon after salmon. Between each fish catching he solaced himself with a good pull from a flask, which he returned to his pocket, however, without offering to let Boaty have any participation in the refreshment. Boaty, partly a little professionally jealous, perhaps, at the success, and partly indignant at receiving

less than his usual attention on such occasions, and seeing no prospect of amendment, deliberately pulled the boat to shore, shouldered the oars, rods, landing-nets, and all the fishing apparatus which he had provided, and set off homewards. His companion, far from considering his day's work to be over, and keen for more sport, was amazed, and peremptorily ordered him to come back. But all the answer made by the offended Boaty was, 'Na, na; them 'at drink by themsells may just fish by themsells.'

The charge these old domestics used to take of the interests of the family, and the cool way in which they took upon them to protect those interests, sometimes led to very provoking, and sometimes to very ludicrous exhibitions of importance. A friend told me of a dinner scene illustrative of this sort of interference which had happened at Airth in the last generation. Mrs Murray of Abercairney had been amongst the guests, and at dinner one of the family noticed that she was looking for the proper spoon to help herself with salt. The old servant Thomas was appealed to, that the want might be supplied. He did not notice the appeal. It was repeated in a more peremptory manner: 'Thomas, Mrs Murray has not a salt spoon,' to which he replied most emphatically, 'Last time Mrs Murray dined here, we *lost* a salt spoon.' An old servant who took a similar charge of everything that went on in the family, having observed that his master thought he had drunk wine with every lady at table, but had overlooked one, jogged his memory with the question, 'What ails ye at her wi' the green gown?'

In my own family I know a case of a very long service, and where, no doubt, there was much interest and attachment, but it was a case where the temper had not softened under the influence of years, but had rather assumed that form of disposition which we denominate *crusty*. My grand-uncle, Sir A. Ramsay, died in 1806, and left a domestic who had been in his service since

he was ten years of age; and being at the time of his master's death past fifty or well on to sixty, he must have been more than forty years a servant in the family. From the retired life my grand-uncle had been leading, Jamie Layal had much of his own way, and, like many a domestic so situated, he did not like to be contradicted, and, in fact, could not bear to be found fault with. My uncle, who had succeeded to a part of my grand-uncle's property, succeeded also to Jamie Layal, and from respect to his late master's memory and Jamie's own services, he took him into the house, intending him to act as house-servant. However, this did not answer, and he was soon kept on, more with the form than the reality of any active duty, and took any light work that was going on about the house. In this capacity it was his daily task to feed a flock of turkeys who were growing up to maturity. On one occasion, my aunt having followed him in his work, and having observed an enormous waste of food, and that the ground was actually covered with grain which they could not eat, and which would soon be destroyed and lost, naturally remonstrated, and suggested a more reasonable and provident supply. But all the answer she got from the offended Jamie was a bitter rejoinder, 'Weel, then, neist time they shall get nane ava!' On another occasion a family from a distance had called whilst my uncle and aunt were out of the house. Jamie came into the parlour to deliver the cards, or to announce that they had called. My aunt, somewhat vexed at not having been in the way, inquired what message Mr and Mrs Innes had left, as she had expected one. 'No! no message.' She returned to the charge, and asked again if they had not told him anything he was to repeat. Still 'No! no message.' 'But did they say nothing? Are you sure they said nothing?' Jamie, sadly put out and offended at being thus interrogated, at last burst forth, 'They neither said ba nor bum,' and indignantly left the room, banging the door after him. A characteristic anecdote of one of

these old domestics I have from a friend who was acquainted with the parties concerned. The old man was standing at the side-board and attending to the demands of a pretty large dinner party; the calls made for various wants from the company became so numerous and frequent that the attendant got quite bewildered, and lost his patience and temper; at length he gave vent to his indignation in the remonstrance addressed to the whole company, 'Cry a' thegither, that's the way to be served.'

I have two characteristic and dry Scottish answers, traditional in the Lothian family, supplied to me by the present excellent and highly gifted young Marquis. A Marquis of Lothian, of a former generation, observed in his walk two workmen very busy with a ladder to reach a bell, on which they were keeping up a furious ringing. He asked what was the object of making such a din, to which the answer was: 'Oh, just, my lord, to ca' the workmen together.' 'Why, how many are there?' asked his lordship. 'Ou, just Sandy and me,' was the quiet rejoinder. The same Lord Lothian, looking about the garden, directed his gardener's attention to a particular plum-tree, charging him to be careful of the produce of that tree, and send the whole of it in marked, as it was of a very particular kind. 'Ou,' said the gardener, 'I'll do that, my lord; there's just twa o' them.'

I have heard of an old Forfarshire lady who, knowing the habits of her old and spoilt servant, when she wished a note to be taken without loss of time, held it open and read it over to him, saying, 'There noo, Andrew, ye ken a' that's in't; noo dinna stop to open it, but just send it aff.' Of another servant when sorely tried by an unaccustomed bustle and hurry, a very amusing anecdote has been recorded. His mistress, a woman of high rank, who had been living in much quiet and retirement for some time, was called upon to entertain a large party at dinner. She consulted with Nichol, her faithful servant, and all the arrangements were made

for the great event. As the company were arriving, the lady saw Nichol running about in great agitation, and in his shirt sleeves. She remonstrated, and said that as the guests were coming in he must put on his coat. 'Indeed, my lady,' was his excited reply, 'indeed, there's sae muckle rinning here and rinning there, that I'm just distrackit. I hae cast'n my coat and waistcoat, and faith I dinna ken how lang I can thole[1] my breeks.' There is often a ready wit in this class of character, marked by their replies. I have the following communicated from an ear witness: 'Weel, Peggy,' said a man to an old family servant, 'I wonder yer aye single yet?' 'Me marry,' said she indignantly; 'I wadna gie my single life for a' the double anes I ever saw.'

An old woman was exhorting a servant once about her ways. 'You serve the deevil,' said she. 'Me!' said the girl; 'Na, na, I dinna serve the deevil, I serve ae single lady.'

A baby was out with the nurse, who walked it up and down a garden. 'Is't a laddie or a lassie?' said the gardener. 'A laddie,' said the maid. 'Weel,' says he, 'I'm glad o' that, for there's ower mony women in the world.' 'Hech man,' said Jess, 'div ye no ken there's aye maist sawn o' the best crap?'

The answers of servants used curiously to illustrate habits and manners of the time, as the economical modes of her mistress' life were well touched by the lass who thus described her ways and domestic habits with her household: 'She's vicious upo' the wark: but eh, she's vary mysterious o' the victualling.'

A country habit of making the gathering of the congregation in the churchyard previous to and after divine service an occasion for gossip and business, which I remember well, is thoroughly described in the following: A lady, on hiring a servant-girl in the country, told her, as a great indulgence, that she should have the liberty of attending the church every Sunday, but

[1] Bear.

that she would be expected to return home always immediately on the conclusion of service. The lady, however, rather unexpectedly found a positive objection raised against this apparently reasonable arrangement. 'Then I canna engadge wi' ye, mem; for 'deed I wadna gie the crack i' the kirkyard for a' the sermon.'

The changes that many of us have lived to witness in this kind of intercourse between families and old servants is a part of a still greater change—the change in that modification of the feudal system, the attachment of clans. This, also, from transfers of property and extinction of old families in the Highlands, as well as from more general causes, is passing away; and it includes also changes in the intercourse between landed proprietors and cottagers, and abolition of harvest homes, and such meetings. People are now more independent of each other, and service is become a pecuniary and not a sentimental question. The extreme contrast of that old-fashioned Scottish intercourse of families with their servants and dependants, of which I have given some amusing examples, is found in the modern manufactory system. There the service is a mere question of personal interest. One of our first practical engineers, and one of the first engine-makers in England, told my brother that he employed and paid handsomely on an average 1,200 workmen; but that they held so little feeling for him as their master, that not above half a dozen of the number would notice him when passing him either in the works or out of work hours. Contrast this advanced stage of dependants' indifference with the familiarity of domestic intercourse we have been describing!

CHAPTER IV

ON SCOTTISH LANGUAGE AND DIALECT, INCLUDING SCOTTISH PROVERBS

WE come next to reminiscences chiefly connected with peculiarities which turned upon our Scottish LANGUAGE, including, of course, change of dialect and expressions. Now this is a very important change, and affects in a greater degree than many persons would imagine the general modes and aspect of society. I suppose at one time the two countries of England and Scotland were considered as almost speaking a different language, and I suppose also, that from the period of the union of the crowns the language has been assimilating. We see the process of assimilation going on, and ere long amongst persons of education and birth very little difference will be perceptible. With regard to that class a great change has taken place in my time. I recollect old Scottish ladies and gentlemen who regularly *spoke Scotch.* It was not, mark me, speaking English with an accent. No; it was downright Scotch. Every tone and every syllable was Scotch. For example, I recollect old Miss Erskine of Dun, a fine specimen of a real lady, and daughter of an ancient Scottish house. Many people now would not understand her. She was always the lady, notwithstanding her dialect, and to none could the epithet vulgar be less appropriately applied. I speak of thirty years ago, and yet I recollect her accost to me as well as if it were yesterday. 'I did na ken ye were i' the toun.' Taking words and accent together, an address how totally unlike what we now meet with in society. Some of the old Scottish words which we can remember are delicious; but how strange they

would sound to the ears of the present generation! Fancy that in walking from church, and discussing the sermon, a lady of rank should now express her opinion of it by the description of its being 'but a hummelcorn discourse.' Many living persons can remember Angus old ladies who would say to their nieces and daughters 'Whatna hummeldoddie of a mutch hae ye gotten?' meaning a flat and low-crowned cap. In speaking of the dryness of the soil on a road in Lanarkshire, a farmer said, 'It stoors[1] in an oor.[2]' How would this be as tersely translated into English? The late Duchess of Gordon sat at dinner next an English gentleman who was carving, and who made it a boast that he was thoroughly master of the Scottish language. Her Grace turned to him and said 'Rax me a spaul o' that bubbly jock.' The unfortunate man was completely *nonplussed*. A Scottish gentleman was entertaining at his house an English cousin who professed himself as rather knowing in the language of the north side of the Tweed. He asked him what he supposed to be the meaning of the expression 'ripin' the ribs.'[3] To which he readily answered, 'Oh, it describes a very fat man.' I profess myself an out and out Scotchman. I have strong national partialities—call them if you will national prejudices. I cherish a great love of old Scottish language. Some of our pure Scottish ballad poetry is unsurpassed in any language for grace and pathos. How expressive, how beautiful are its phrases! You can't translate them. Take this example of power in a Scotch expression to describe what is in human life, and it is one of our most familiar ones; as thus—we meet an old friend, we talk over bygone days, and remember many who were dear to us both, once bright and young and gay, of whom some remain, honoured, prosperous, and happy—of whom some are under a cloud of mis-

[1] Stoor is, Scottice, *dust in motion*, and there is really no synonyme for it in English.
[2] Hour. [3] Clearing ashes out of the bars of the grate.

fortune or disgrace—some are broken in health and spirits —some sunk into the grave; we recall old familiar places —old companions, pleasures, and pursuits; as Scotchmen our hearts are touched with these remembrances of

AULD LANG SYNE.

Match me the phrase in English. You can't translate it. The fitness and the beauty lie in the felicity of the language. Like many happy expressions, it is not transferable into another tongue, just like the 'simplex munditiis' of Horace, which describes the natural grace of female elegance, or the *ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα* of Æschylus, which describes the bright sparkling of the ocean in the sun. I cannot help thinking that a change of national language involves also a change of national character. Numerous examples of great power in Scottish phraseology, both in the picturesque, the feeling, the wise, and the humorous, might be taken from the works of Robert Burns or Allan Ramsay, and which lose their charm altogether when *unscottified*. The speaker certainly seems to take a strength and character from his words. We must now look for specimens of this racy and expressive tongue in the more retired parts of the country. It is no longer to be found in high places. It has disappeared from the social circles of our cities. In my early days the intercourse with the peasantry of Forfarshire, Kincardineshire, and especially of Deeside, was most amusing, not that the things said were so much out of the common, as that the language in which they were conveyed was picturesque and odd and taking. And certainly it does appear to me that as the language grows more uniform and conventional, less marked and peculiar in its dialect and expressions, so does the character of those who speak it become so. I have a rich sample of Mid-Lothian Scotch from a young friend in the country, who describes the conversation of an old woman on the property as amusing her by such

specimens of genuine Scottish raciness and humour. On one occasion, for instance, the young lady had told her humble friend that she was going to Ireland, and would have to undergo a sea voyage. 'Weel, noo, ye dinna mean that! Ance I thocht to gang across to tither side o' the Queensferry wi' some ither folks to a fair, ye ken; but just when ere I pat my fit in the boat, the boat gie wallop, and my heart gie a loup, and I thocht I'd gang oot o' my judgment athegither, so says I, Na, na, ye gang awa by yoursells to tither side, and I'll bide here till sik times as ye come awa back.' When we hear our Scottish language at home, and spoken by our own countrymen, we are not struck with any remarkable effects; but it must have a far more impressive character when heard amongst those who speak a different tongue, and when encountered in other lands. I recollect the late Sir Robert Liston expressing this feeling in his own case. When our ambassador at Constantinople, some Scotchmen had been recommended to him for some purpose of private or of government business; and Sir Robert was always ready to do a kind thing for a countryman. He found them out in a barber's shop waiting for being shaved in turn. One came in rather late, and, seeing he had scarcely room at the end of the seat, addressed his countryman, 'Neebour, wad ye sit a bit wast.' What strong associations must have been called up, by hearing, in a distant land, such an expression in Scottish tones. We may fancy the amusement of the officers of a regiment in the West Indies at the innocent remark of a young lad, who had just joined from Scotland. On meeting at dinner, his salutation to his colonel was 'Anither het day, Cornal,' as if 'het days' were in Barbadoes few and far between, as they were in his dear old stormy cloudy Scotland. Or take the case of a Scottish saying, which indicated at once her dialect and the economical habits of her hardy and struggling sons. A young Scotchman, who had been some time in London, met his friend recently come up from the north

to pursue his fortune in the great metropolis. On discussing matters connected with their new life in London, the more experienced visitor remarked upon the greater *expenses* there than in the retired Scottish town which they had left. 'Ay,' said the other, sighing over the reflection, 'whun ye get cheenge for a saxpence here, it's soon slippit awa.' I recollect a story of my father's which illustrates the force of dialect, although confined to the inflections of a single monosyllable. On riding home one evening, he passed a cottage or small farmhouse, where there was a considerable assemblage of people, and an evident incipient merry-making for some festive occasion. On asking one of the lasses standing about what it was, she answered, 'Ou it's just a wedding of Jock Thamson and Janet Fraser.' To the question 'Is the bride rich?' there was a plain quiet 'Na;' 'Is she young?' a more emphatic and decided 'Naa!'; but to the query 'Is she bonny?' a most elaborate and prolonged shout of 'Naa!' Another amusing anecdote of a pithy and jocular reply, comprised in one syllable, is recorded of an eccentric legal Scottish functionary of the last century. An advocate, of whose legal qualifications he had formed rather a low estimate, was complaining to him of being passed over in a recent appointment to the bench, and expressed his sense of the injustice with which he had been treated. He was very indignant at his claims and merit being overlooked in their not choosing him for the new judge, adding, with much acrimony, 'And I can tell you they might have got a "waur."'[1] To which, as if merely coming over the complainant's language again, the answer was a grave 'Whaur?'[2] The merit of the impertinence was, that it sounded as if it were merely a repetition of his friend's last words, waur and whaur. It was as if '*echo* answered whaur?'. As I have said, the oddity and acuteness of the speaker arose from the manner of expression, not from the thing said. In fact,

[1] Worse. [2] Where.

the same thing said in plain English would be mere commonplace. I recollect being much amused with a dialogue between my brother and his man, the chief manager of a farm which he had just taken, and, I suspect, in a good measure, manager of the *farmer* as well. At any rate he committed to this acute overseer all the practical details; and on the present occasion had sent him to market to dispose of a cow and a pony, a simple enough transaction, and with a simple enough result. The cow was brought back, the pony was sold. But the man's description of it forms the point. 'Well, John, have you sold the cow?' 'Na, but I *grippit* a chiel for the powny!' The '*grippit*' was most expressive! I remember accompanying a shooting party on the Grampians, not with a gun like the rest, but with a botanical box for collecting specimens of mountain plants. The party had got very hot, and very tired, and very cross. On the way home, whilst sitting down to rest, a gamekeeper sort of attendant, and a character in his way, said, 'I wish I was in the dining-room of Fasque.' An old laird very testily replied, 'Ye'd soon be keckit out o' that,' to which the other replied, not at all daunted, 'Weel, weel, then, I wadna be far frae the kitchen.' A quaint and characteristic reply, I recollect from another farm-servant. My eldest brother had just been constructing a piece of machinery, which was driven by a stream of water running through the farmyard. There was a thrashing machine, a winnowing machine, and circular saw for splitting trees into paling and other contrivances of a like kind. Observing an old man, who had long been about the place, looking very attentively at all that was going on, he said, 'Wonderful things people can do now, Robby?' 'Aye,' said Robby, 'indeed, Sir Alexander, I'm thinking if Solomon was alive now he'd be thought naething o'!' But, after all, it was amongst the old ladies that the great abundance of choice pungent Scottish expressions, such as you certainly do not meet with in these days, was to be

sought. In their position of society, education either in England, or education conducted by English teachers, has so spread in Scottish families; intercourse with the south has been so increased, that all these colloquial peculiarities are fast disappearing. Some of the ladies of this older school felt some indignation at the change which they lived to see what was fast going on. One of them being asked if an individual whom she had lately seen was 'Scotch,' answered with some bitterness, 'I canna say; ye a' speak sae *genteel* now that I dinna ken wha's Scotch.' This class of ladies whom I refer to generally lived in provincial towns, never dreamt of going from home, and many of them had never been in London, or had even crossed the Tweed. But as Lord Cockburn's experience goes back further than mine, and as he had special opportunities of being acquainted with their characteristic peculiarities, I will quote his animated description at page 57 of his Memorials. 'There was a singular race of old Scotch ladies. They were a delightful set—strong-headed, warm-hearted, and high-spirited—merry even in solitude; very resolute; indifferent about the modes and habits of the modern world, and adhering to their own ways, so as to stand out like primitive rocks above ordinary society. Their prominent qualities of sense, humour, affection, and spirit, were embodied in curious outsides, for they all dressed, and spoke, and did exactly as they chose. Their language, like their habits, entirely Scotch, but without any other vulgarity than what perfect naturalness is sometimes mistaken for.'—*Memorials of his Time*, by H. Cockburn, p. 57.

This is a masterly description of a race now all but passed away. I have known several of them in my early days; and amongst them we must look for the racy Scottish peculiarities of diction and of expression which, with them, are also nearly gone. Lord Cockburn has given some illustrations of these peculiarities; and I have heard others, especially connected with Jacobite

partialities, of which I say nothing, as they are in fact rather *strong* for such an occasion as the present. One, however, I heard lately as coming from a Forfarshire old lady of this class, which bears upon the point of 'resolute' determination referred to in Lord Cockburn's description. She had been very positive in the disclaiming of some assertion which had been attributed to her, and on being asked if she had not written it, or something very like it, she replied, 'Na, na; I never write onything of consequence—I may deny what I say, but I canna deny what I write.' Mrs. Baird of Newbyth, the mother of our distinguished countryman the late General Sir David Baird, was always spoken of as a grand specimen of the class. When the news arrived from India of the gallant but unfortunate action of '84 against Hyder Ali, in which her son, then Captain Baird, was engaged, it was stated that he and other officers had been taken prisoners and chained together two and two. The friends were careful in breaking such sad intelligence to the mother of Captain Baird. When, however, she was made fully to understand the position of her son and his gallant companions, disdaining all weak and useless expressions of her own grief, and knowing well the restless and athletic habits of her son all she said was 'Lord pity the chiel that's chained to our Davy.'[1]

The ladies of this class had certainly no affectation in speaking of those who came under their displeasure, even when life and death were concerned. I had an anecdote illustrative of this characteristic, in a well-known old lady of the last century, Miss Johnstone of Westerhall. She had been extremely indignant that, on the death of her brother, his widow had proposed to

[1] It is but due to the memory of 'our Davy' to state that 'the chiel' to whom he was chained bore high testimony to the kindness and consideration with which he was treated by Captain Baird. His companion was an elder brother of the late Sir John Hope of Pinkie, who died in service.

sell off the old furniture of Westerhall. She was attached to it from old associations, and considered the parting with it little short of sacrilege. The event was, however, arrested by death, or, as she described the result, 'the furniture was a' to be roupit, and we could nae persuade her. But before the sale cam on, in God's gude providence, she just clinkit aff hersell.' Of fine acute sarcasm I recollect hearing an expression from rather a *modern* sample of the class, a charming character, and only to a degree answering to the description of the older generation. Conversation turned, and with just indignation, on the infidel remarks which had been heard from a certain individual, and on his irreverent treatment of Holy Scripture; all that this lady condescended to say of him was 'Gey impudent of him, I think.' A recorded reply of old Lady Perth to a French gentleman is quaint and characteristic. They had been discussing the respective merits of the cookery of each country. The Frenchman offended the old Scottish peeress by some disparaging remarks on Scottish dishes, and by highly preferring those of France. All she would answer was 'Weel, weel, some fouk like parritch, and some like paddocks."[1]

Of this older race—the ladies who were aged fifty years ago—the description is given by Lord Cockburn in strong and bold outline. I would pretend to nothing more than giving a few illustrative details from my own experience, which may assist the description by adding some practical realities to the picture. Several of them whom I knew in my early days certainly answered to many of those descriptions of Lord Cockburn. Their language and expressions had a zest and peculiarity which is gone, and which would not, I fear, do for modern life and times. I have spoken of Miss Erskine of Dun, which is near Montrose. She, however, resided in Edinburgh. But those I knew best had lived many years in the then retired society of a country town.

[1] Frogs.

Some were my own relations; and in boyish days (for they had not generally much patience with boys) were looked up to with considerable awe as very formidable personages. Their characters and modes of expression in many respects remarkably corresponded with Lord Cockburn's description. There was a dry Scottish humour which we fear their successors do not inherit. One of these Montrose ladies had many anecdotes told of her quaint ways and sayings. Walking in the street one day, slippery from frost, she fairly fell down. A young officer with much politeness came forward and picked her up, earnestly asking her at the same time, 'I hope, ma'am, you are no worse?' to which she replied, looking at him very steadily, 'Indeed, sir, I'm just as little the better.' A few days after, she met her military supporter in a shop. He was a fine tall youth, upwards of six feet high, and by way of making some grateful recognition for his late polite attention, she eyed him from head to foot, and as she was of the opinion of the old Scotch lady, who declared she 'aye liked bonny fowk,' she viewed her young friend with much satisfaction, but which she only evinced by the dry remark 'Od, ye're a lang lad; God gie ye grace.' I had from a relative or intimate friend of two sisters of this school, well known about Glasgow, an odd account of what it seems from their own statement had passed between them at a country house, where they had attended a sale by auction. As the business of the day went on, a dozen of silver spoons had to be disposed of; and before they were put up for competition, they were, according to the usual custom, handed round for inspection to the company. When returned into the hands of the auctioneer, he found only eleven. In great wrath, he ordered the door to be shut, that no one might escape, and insisted on every one present being searched, to discover the delinquent. One of the sisters, in consternation, whispered to the other, 'Esther, ye hae nae gotten the spune?' to which

the other replied, 'Na; but I hae gotten Mrs Siddons in my pocket.' She had been struck by a miniature of the great actress, and quietly had pocketed it. The cautious reply of the sister was, 'Then just drop her, Esther.' One of the sisterhood, a connection of my own, had much of this dry Scottish humour. She had a lodging in the house of a respectable grocer; and on her niece most innocently asking her 'If she was not very fond of her landlord,' in reference to the excellence of her apartments and the attention he paid to her comfort, she demurred to the question, on the score of its propriety, by replying, 'Fond of my landlord; that would be an *unaccountable* fondness.' An amusing account was given of an interview and conversation between this lady and the provost of Montrose. She had demurred at paying some municipal tax with which she had been charged, and the provost was anxious to prevent her getting into difficulty on the subject, and kindly called to convince her of the fairness of the claim, and the necessity of paying it. In his explanation he referred back to his own bachelor days when a similar payment had been required from him. 'I assure you, ma'am,' he said, 'when I was in your situation I was called upon in a similar way for this tax;' to which she replied, in quiet scorn: 'In my situation! an whan were ye in my situation—an auld maid living in a flat wi' an ae lass?' But the complaints of such imposts were urged in a very humorous manner by another Montrose old lady, Miss Helen Carnegy of Craigo; she hated paying taxes, and always pretended to misunderstand their nature. One day, receiving a notice of such payment signed by the provost (Thom), she broke out, 'I dinna understand thae taxes; but I just think when Mrs Thom wants a new gown, the provost sends me a tax paper!' The good lady's naive rejection of the idea that she could be in any sense 'fond of her landlord' already referred to was somewhat in unison with a similar feeling recorded to

have been expressed by the late Mr Wilson, the celebrated Scottish vocalist. He was taking lessons from the late Mr Finlay Dun, one of the most accomplished musicians of his day. Mr Dun had just returned from Italy, and, impressed with admiration of the deep pathos, sentiment, and passion of the Italian school of music, he regretted to find in his pupil so lovely a voice and so much talent losing much of its effect for want of feeling. Anxious, therefore, to throw into his friend's performance something of the Italian expression he proposed to bring it out by this suggestion: 'Now, Mr Wilson, just suppose that I am your lady love, and sing to me as you could imagine yourself doing were you desirous of impressing her with your earnestness and affection.' Poor Mr Wilson hesitated, blushed, and under doubt how far such a personification even in his case was allowable, at last remonstrated, 'Ay, Mr Dun, ye forget I'm a married man!' A case has been reported of a country girl, however, who thought it possible there might be an excess in such scrupulous regard to appearances. On her marriage-day, the youth to whom she was about to be united said to her in a triumphant tone: 'Weel, Jenny, haven't I been unco ceevil,' alluding to the fact that during their whole courtship he had never even given her a kiss. Her quiet reply was, 'Ou, aye, man; senselessly ceevil.'

One of these Montrose ladies and a sister lived together; and in a very quiet way they were in the habit of giving little dinner parties, to which occasionally they invited their gentleman friends. However, gentlemen were not always to be had; and on one occasion, when such a difficulty had occurred, they were talking over the matter with a friend. The one lady seemed to consider such an acquisition almost essential to the having a dinner at all; the other, who did not see the same necessity, quietly adding, 'But, indeed, our Jean thinks a man perfect salvation.' There was occasionally a pawky semi-sarcastic humour in the

replies of some of the ladies we speak of that was quite irresistible, of which I have from a friend a good illustration in an anecdote well known at the time. A late well-known member of the Scottish bar, when a youth, was somewhat of a dandy, and, I suppose, somewhat short and sharp in his temper. He was going to pay a visit in the country, and was making a great fuss about his preparing and the putting up his habiliments. His old aunt was much annoyed at all this bustle, and stopped him by the somewhat contemptuous question, 'Whaur's this you're gaun, Robby, that ye mak sic a grand wark about your claes?' The young man lost temper, and pettishly replied 'I'm going to the devil.' ''Deed, Robby, then,' was the quiet answer, 'ye need na be sae nice, he'll just tak ye as ye are.' Ladies of this class had a quiet mode of expressing themselves on very serious subjects, which indicated their quaint power of description, rather than their want of feeling. Thus, of two sisters, when one had died, it was supposed that she had injured herself by an imprudent indulgence in strawberries and cream, of which she had partaken in the country. A friend was condoling with the surviving sister, and, expressing her sorrow, had added, 'I had hoped your sister was to live many years.' To which her relative rejoined, 'Leeve! how could she leeve! she just felled hersell at Craigo wi' straeberries and cream!' However, she spoke with the same degree of coolness of her own decease. For when her friend was comforting her in illness, by the hopes that she would, after winter, enjoy again some of their country spring butter, she exclaimed, without the slightest idea of being guilty of any irreverence, 'Spring butter! by that time I shall be buttering in heaven.' When really dying and when friends were round her bed, she overheard one of them saying to another, 'Her face has lost its colour; it grows like a sheet of paper.' The quaint spirit even then broke out in the remark, 'Then I'm sure it maun be *brown* paper.' It was told of an old

Miss Johnstone of Hawk Hill, that, when dying, a tremendous storm of rain and thunder came on, so as to shake the house. In the same quaint eccentric spirit, and with no thought of profane or light allusions, she looked up, and, listening to the storm, quietly remarked, in reference to her departure, 'Ech, sirs! what a nicht for me to be fleeing thro' the air!' A very strong-minded lady of the class, and, in Lord Cockburn's language, 'indifferent about modes and habits,' had been asking from a lady the character of a cook she was about to hire. The lady naturally entered a little upon her moral qualifications, and described her as a very decent woman; the reply to which was, 'Oh, d——n her decency; can she make good collops?' an answer which would somewhat surprise a lady of Moray Place now, if engaged in a similar discussion of a servant's merits.

I had two grand-aunts living at Montrose at that time, two Miss Ramsays of Balmain. They were somewhat of the severe class, Nelly especially, who was an object rather of awe than of affection. She certainly had a very awful appearance to young apprehensions, from the strangeness of her head gear. Ladies of this class Lord Cockburn has spoken of as having their peculiarities embodied in curious outsides, as they dressed, spoke, and did exactly as they chose. As a sample of such curious outside and dress, my good aunt used to go about the house with an immense pillow strapped over her head—warm but formidable. These two maiden grand-aunts had a niece on a visit, an aunt of mine, who had made what they considered a very imprudent marriage, and where considerable poverty was likely to accompany the step she had taken. The poor niece had to bear many a slap directed to her improvident union, as for example: One day she had asked for a piece of tape for some work she had in hand as a young wife expecting to become a mother. Miss Nell said with much point, 'Aye, Kitty, ye shall get a

bit knitting (*i.e.* a bit of tape). We hae a' thing; we're no married.' It was this lady who, by an inadvertent use of a term, showed what was passing in her mind in a way which must have been quite transparent to the bystanders. At a supper which she was giving, she was evidently much annoyed at the reckless and clumsy manner in which a gentleman was operating upon a ham which was at table, cutting out great lumps, and distributing them to the company. The lady said, in a very querulous tone, 'O, Mr *Divet*, will you help Mrs So and So?'—divet being a provincial term for a turf or sod cut out of the green, and the resemblance of it to the pieces carved out by the gentleman evidently having taken possession of her imagination. Mrs Helen Carnegy of Craigo was a thorough specimen of this class of old Scottish ladies. She lived in Montrose, and died in 1818, at the advanced age of 91. She was a Jacobite, and very aristocratic in her feelings, but on social terms with many burghers of Montrose, or Munross, as it was called. She preserved a very nice distinction of addresses, suited to different individuals in the town, according as she placed them in the scale of her consideration. She liked a party at quadrille, and sent out her servant every morning to invite the ladies required to make up the game, and her directions were graduated thus: 'Nelly, you'll gang to Lady Carnegy's, and mak my compliments, and ask the *honour* of her ladyship's company, and that of the Miss Carnegies, to tea this evening; and if they canna come, ging to the Miss Mudies, and ask the *pleasure* of their company; and if they canna come, you may ging to Miss Hunter and ask the *favour* of her company; and if she canna come, ging to Lucky Spark and *bid her come*.'

At the beginning of this century, when the fear of invasion was rife in all the seaports, it was proposed to mount a small battery at the water-mouth by subscription, and she was waited on by a deputation from the town council. One of them having addressed her

on the subject, she heard him with some impatience, and when he had finished, she said, 'Are ye ane o' the town council?' He replied: 'I have that honour, ma'am.' To which she rejoined, 'Ye may hae that *profit*, but honour ye hae nane;' and then to the point, she added, 'But I've been tell't that ae day's wark o' twa or three men wad mount the cannon, and that it may be a' dune for twenty shillings, now there's twa pounds to ye.' The councillor pocketed the money and withdrew. On one occasion, as she sat in an easy chair, having assumed the habits and privileges of age, Mr Mollison, the minister of the Established Kirk, called on her to solicit for some charity. She did not like being asked for money, and, from her Jacobite principles, she certainly did not respect the Presbyterian Kirk. When he came in, she made an inclination of the head, and he said, 'Don't get up madam.' She replied 'Get up! I wadna rise out of my chair for King George himsell, let abee a Whig minister.'

It is a curious subject the various shades of Scottish dialect and Scottish expressions, commonly called Scotticisms. We mark in the course of fifty years how some disappear altogether; others become more and more rare, and of all of them we may say, I think, that the specimens of them are to be looked for every year more in the descending classes of society. What was common amongst peers, judges, lairds, advocates, and people of family and education, is now found in humbler ranks of life. There are few persons perhaps who have been born in Scotland, and who have lived long in Scotland, whom a nice southern ear might not detect as from the north. But it is by nicer shades of distinction than by those strong and characteristic marks of a Caledonian origin with which some of us have had practical acquaintance. I possess two curious, and now, I believe, rather scarce, publications on the prevalent Scotticisms of our speaking and writing. One is entitled *Scotticisms designed to Correct Improprieties of Speech and Writing*, by

Dr Beattie of Aberdeen. The other is to the same purpose, and is entitled *Observations on the Scottish Dialect*, by the late Right Honourable Sir John Sinclair. Expressions which were common in their days, and used by persons of all ranks, are not known by the rising generation. Many amusing equivoques used to be current, arising from Scotch people in England applying terms and expressions in a manner rather surprising to Southern ears. Thus, the story was told of a public character dear to the memory of Scotland, Henry Dundas (Viscount Melville), applying to Mr Pitt for the loan of a horse '*the length* of Highgate,' a very common expression in Scotland at that time to signify the distance to which the ride was to extend. Mr Pitt good-humouredly wrote back to say that he was afraid he had not a horse in his possession quite so long as Mr Dundas had mentioned, but he had sent the longest he had. There is a well-known case of mystification, caused to English ears by the use of Scottish terms, which took place in the House of Peers during the examination of the Magistrates of Edinburgh touching the particulars of the Porteous Mob in 1736. The Duke of Newcastle having asked the Provost with what kind of shot the town-guard, commanded by Porteous, had loaded their muskets, received the unexpected reply, 'Ou, just sic as ane shoots dukes and fools wi'.' The answer was considered as a contempt of the House of Lords, and the poor Provost would have suffered from misconception of his patois, had not the Duke of Argyle (who must have been exceedingly amused) explained that the worthy chief magistrate's expression, when rendered into English, meant to describe the shot used for *ducks and waterfowl*. The circumstance is referred to by Sir W. Scott in the notes to *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*.

I remember an honest Dandie Dinmont on a visit to Bath. A lady, who had taken a kind charge of him, accompanied him to the theatre, and in the most thrilling scene of Kemble's acting, what is usually termed the

dagger scene, she turned to the farmer with a whisper: 'Is not that fine?' to which the confidential reply was, 'Oh, mem, it's verra *enterteening!*' Enterteening expressing his idea of the *interesting!* In the life of the late Patrick Tytler, the amiable and gifted historian of Scotland, there occurs an amusing exemplification of the utter confusion of ideas caused by the use of Scottish phraseology. The family, when they went to London, had taken with them an old Scottish servant who had no notion of any terms beside her own. She came in one day greatly disturbed at the extremely backward state of knowledge of domestic affairs amongst the Londoners. She had been to so many shops and could not get 'a great broon pig[1] to haud the butter in.' Such phrases as were common fifty years ago, if occurring in conversation or correspondence now, would, to this generation, be unintelligible. There is a form of expression which has been a great favourite in Scotland, but which, in my recollection, has much gone out of practice—I mean the frequent use of diminutives, generally adopted either as terms of endearment or of contempt. Thus, it was very common to speak of a person whom you meant rather to undervalue, as a *mannie*, a *bodie*, a *bit bodie*, or a *wee bit mannie*. The Bailie in *Rob Roy*, when he intended to represent his party as persons of no importance, used the expression 'We are bits o' Glasgow bodies.' In a popular child's song, we have the endearing expression, 'My wee bit laddie.' We have known the series of diminutives, as applied to the canine race, very rich in diminution. There is: 1. A dog; 2. A doggie; 3. A bit doggie; 4. A wee bit doggie; and even 5. A wee bit doggiekie. We used to hear such expressions as those, which would not now be reckoned genteel: 'Come in and get your bit dinner;' 'I hope you are now settled in your ain bit housie.' An admirable Scotch expression I recollect from one of the Montrose ladies before referred to. Her niece was asking

[1] Earthenware vessel.

a great many questions on some point concerning which her aunt had been giving her information, and coming over and over the ground, demanding an explanation how this had happened, and why something else was so and so. The old lady lost her patience, and at last burst forth: 'I winna be back-speired noo, Pally Fullerton.' Back-speired! how much more pithy and expressive than cross-examined! Another capital expression to mark that a person has stated a point rather under than over the truth is 'The less I lee,' as in *Guy Mannering*, where the precentor exclaims to Mrs MacCandlish: 'Aweel, gude wife, than the less I lee.' We have found it a very amusing task collecting together a number of these phrases, and forming them into a connected epistolary composition. We may imagine the sort of puzzle it would be to a young person of the present day—one of what we may call the new school. We will suppose an English young lady, or an English educated young lady, lately married, receiving such a letter as the following from the Scottish aunt of her husband. We may suppose it to be written by a very old lady, who, for the last fifty years, has not moved from home, and has changed nothing of her early days. I can safely affirm that every word of it I have either seen written in a letter, or have heard in ordinary conversation:

Montrose[1]

'My dear Niece, I am real glad to find my *nevy* has made so good a choice as to have secured you for his wife; and I am sure this step will add much to his comfort, and we *behove* to rejoice at it. He will now look forward to his evening at home, and you will be happy because you will never *want* him. It will be a great pleasure when you hear him in the *trance*, and wipe his feet upon the *bass*. But Willy is not strong, and you must look well after him. I hope you do not let him *snuff* so much as he did. He had a sister, poor

[1] The Scotticisms are printed in Italics.

thing, who died early. She was remarkably clever, and well read, and most intelligent, but was always uncommonly *silly*.[1] In the autumn of '40 she had a *sair host*, and was aye *speaking through a cold*, and at dinner never did more than to *sup a few family broth*. I am afraid she did not *change her feet* when she came in from the wet one evening. I never *let on* that I observed anything to be wrong; but I remember asking her to come and *sit upon* the fire. But she went out and did not *take* the door with her. She lingered till next spring, when she had a great *income*, and her parents were then too poor to take her south, and she died. I hope you will like the lassie Eppie we have sent you. She is a *discreet* girl, and comes of a decent family. She has a sister *married upon* a Seceding minister at Kirkcaldy. But I hear he expects to be *transported* soon. She was brought up in one of the hospitals here. Her father had been a *souter* and a *pawky chiel* enough, but was *doited* for years, and her mother was *sair dottled*. We have been greatly interested in the hospital where Eppie was *educate*, and intended getting up a bazaar for it, and would have asked you to help us, as we were most anxious to raise some additional funds, when one of the bailies died and left it 10,000 pounds, which was really a great *mortification*. I am not a good *hand of write*, and therefore shall stop. I am very tired, and have been *gantin* for this half hour, and even in correspondence gantin may be *smittin*. The *kitchen*[2] is just coming in, and I *feel a smell of tea*, so when I get my *four hours*, that will refresh me and set me up again.—I am your affectionate aunt,

'ISABEL DINGWALL.'

This letter, then, we suppose written by a very old Forfarshire lady to her niece in England, and perhaps the young lady who received this letter might answer it in a style as strange to her aunt as her aunt's is to

[1] Delicate in health. [2] Tea-urn.

her, especially if she belonged to that lively class of our young female friends who indulge a little in phraseology which they have imbibed from their brothers or male cousins, who have perhaps, for their amusement, encouraged them in its use. The answer, then, might be something like this; and without meaning to be severe or satirical upon our young lady friends, I may truly say that though I never heard from one young lady all these *fast terms*, I have heard the most of them separately from many:

'My dear Aunty, Many thanks for your kind letter and its enclosure. From my not knowing Scotch, I am not quite up to the whole, and some of the expressions I don't *twig* at all. Willie is absent for a few days, but when he returns home he will explain it; he is quite awake on all such things. I am glad you are pleased that Willie and I are now spliced. I am well aware that you will hear me spoken of in some quarters as a fast young lady, but don't believe them. We are certainly very happy at present. Willie comes home from the office every afternoon at five. We generally take a walk before dinner, and read and work if we don't go out; and I assure you we are very jolly. We don't know many people here yet. It is rather a swell neighbourhood; and if we can't get in with the nobs, depend upon it we will never take up with any society that is decidedly snobby. I daresay the girl you are sending will be very useful to us; our present one is a very slow coach. But we hope some day to sport buttons. My father and mother paid us a visit last week. The governor is well, and, notwithstanding years and infirmities, comes out quite a jolly old cove. He is, indeed, if you will pardon the partiality of a daughter, a regular brick. He says he will help us if we can't get on, and I make no doubt will in due time fork out the tin. I am busy working a cap for you, dear aunty; it is from a pretty German pattern, and I think when finished

will be quite a stunner. I have a shop in Regent Street, where I hire patterns and return them without buying them, which I think a capital dodge. I hope you will sport it for my sake the first tea-party you give.

'I have nothing particular to say, but am always

'Your affectionate niece,

'ELIZA DINGWALL.'

'*PS.*—I am trying to break Willie off his horrid habit of taking snuff. I had rather see him take his cigar when we are walking. You will be told, I daresay, that I sometimes take a weed myself. It is not true, dear aunty.'

Before leaving the question of change in Scottish expressions, it may be proper to add a few words on the subject of Scottish *dialects*, i.e. on the differences which exist in different counties or localities in the Scottish tongue itself. These differences used to be as marked as different languages; of course they still exist amongst the peasantry as before. The change consists in their gradual vanishing from the conversation of the educated and refined. The dialects with which I am most conversant are the two which present the greatest contrast, viz., the Angus and the Aberdeen, or the slow and broad Scotch—the quick and sharp Scotch. Whilst the one talks of 'buuts and shoon,' the other calls the same articles 'beets and sheen.' With the Aberdonian, 'what' is always 'fat' or 'fatten,' 'music' is 'meesic,' 'brutes' are 'breets;' 'What are ye duing,' of Southern Scotch, in Aberdeen would be 'Fat are ye deein?' Thus when a Southerner mentioned the death of a friend, a sharp lady of the granite city asked 'Fat deed he o'?' which being utterly incomprehensible to the person asked, another Aberdonian lady kindly explained the question, and put it into language which she supposed *could* not be mistaken, as thus: 'Fat did he dee [illegible]' 'Doing' and 'dying' being both Aberdonicé

'*deeing*' gave rise to an amusing equivoque on the part of my esteemed friend Mr R. Chambers. In the present summer (1859) there were few successful fields of turnips. Calling with two friends, who were sufferers in this way, on a Brechin farmer who was amongst the fortunate *exceptions*, Mr Chambers asked him about his turnips, to which he answered 'Ou, they're *deean* rale weel;' when Mr Chambers, affecting to misunderstand as to the phraseology, turned to his two friends and remarked 'You see it's a *perishing* crop everywhere.' Another ludicrous interrogatory occurred regarding the death of a Mr Thomas Thomson. It appeared there were two cousins of this name, both corpulent men. When it was announced that Mr Thomas Thomson was dead, an Aberdeen friend of the family asked 'Fatten Thamas Thamson?' He was informed that it was a fat Thomas Thomson, upon which the Aberdeen query naturally arose, 'Aye, but fatten fat Thamas Thamson?' The dialect and the local feelings of Aberdeen were said to have produced some amusement in London, when displayed by the lady of the Provost of Aberdeen when accompanying her husband going up officially to the capital. Some persons to whom she had been introduced recommended her going to the opera as one of the sights worthy the attention of a stranger. The good lady, full of the greatness of her situation as wife of the provost, and knowing the sensation her appearance in public occasioned when in her own city, and supposing that a like excitement would accompany her with the London public, rather declined, under the modest plea, 'Fat for should I gang to the opera, just to creat a confeesion.'

I suppose no changes of the last half century have been more remarkable than those which have taken place in the dialect and general manners of our Scottish judges. As a class of society, they have been, of course, ***marked men.*** Many were celebrated for humour, conviviality, and a degree of eccentricity of manners and

habits; many of them equally remarkable, too, for acute and powerful minds—distinguished for profound knowledge of law, and ready tact in the application of its general principles. I have two anecdotes to show, that, both in social and judicial life, a remarkable change must have taken place amongst the 'fifteen.' I am assured that the following scene took place at the *table* of Lord Polkemmet, at a dinner party in his house. When the covers were removed, the dinner was seen to consist of veal broth, a roast fillet of veal, veal cutlets, a florentine (an excellent old Scottish dish composed of veal), a calf's head, calf's foot jelly. The worthy judge could not help observing a surprise on the countenance of his guests, and perhaps a simper on some; so he broke out in explanation: 'Ou ay, it's a cauf; when we kill a beast we just eat up ae side and doun the tither.' The expressions he used to describe his own *judicial* preparations for the bench were very characteristic: 'Ye see I first read a' the pleadings, and then, after letting them wamble in my wame wi' the toddy twa or three days, I gie my ain interlocutor.' For a moment suppose such anecdotes to be told now of any of our high legal functionaries. Imagine the feelings of surprise that would be called forth were the present Justice-Clerk to adopt such imagery in describing the process of preparing *his* legal judgment on a difficult case in his court!

Under this head of Scottish dialect, language, and expressions, we naturally introduce a notice of a large and very interesting verbal question, the subject of our Scottish PROVERBIAL expressions. It is an old remark, that the characteristics of a people are always found in such sayings, and the expression of Bacon has been often quoted: 'The genius, wit, and wisdom of a nation are discovered by their proverbs.' Now, as there can be no doubt that there are proverbs exclusively Scottish, and that as in them we find also many traits of Scottish character, and many peculiarities of Scottish thought

and Scottish language, those which have been much made use of should have a place in our Scottish reminiscences. Indeed, proverbs are literally, in many instances, become *reminiscences*. They now seem to belong to that older generation whom we recollect, and who used them in conversation freely and constantly. To strengthen an argument, or illustrate a remark by a proverb, was then a common practice in conversation. Their use, however, is now considered vulgar, and their formal application is almost prohibited by the rules of polite society. Lord Chesterfield denounced the practice of quoting proverbs as a palpable violation of all polite refinement in conversation. Notwithstanding all this, we acknowledge having much pleasure in recalling our national proverbial expressions. They are full of character, and we find amongst them important truths, expressed forcibly, wisely, and gracefully.

All nations have their proverbs, and a vast number of books have been written on the subject. We find, accordingly, that collections have been made of proverbs considered as belonging peculiarly to Scotland. The collections to which I have had access are the following:

1. The fifth edition, by Balfour, of Ray's *Complete Collection of English Proverbs*, in which is a separate collection of those which are considered Scottish Proverbs, 1813. Ray professes to have taken these from Fergusson's work mentioned below.

2. *A Complete Collection of Scottish Proverbs explained and made intelligible to the English Reader*, by James Kelly, M.A., published in London 1721.

3. *Scottish Proverbs gathered together* by David Fergusson, sometime minister at Dunfermline, and put *ordine alphabetico* when he departed this life anno 1598. Edinburgh, 1641.

4. *A Collection of Scots Proverbs*, dedicated to the Tenantry of Scotland, by Allan Ramsay. This collection is found in the edition of his *Poetical Works*, 3 vols. post

octavo, Edin. 1810, but is not in the handsome edition of 1800, London, 2 vols. 8vo.[1]

5. *Scottish Proverbs*, collected and arranged by Andrew Henderson. With an Introductory Essay by W. Motherwell. Edin. 1832.

6. *The Proverbial Philosophy of Scotland: an Address to the School of Arts*, by William Stirling of Keir, M.P. Stirling and Edin. 1855.

The collection of Ray, the great English naturalist, is well known. The two first editions, published at Cambridge in 1670 and 1678, were by the author; subsequent editions were by other editors.

The work by James Kelly professes to collect Scottish proverbs only. It is a volume of nearly 400 pages, and contains a short explanation or commentary attached to each, and often parallel sayings from other languages. Mr Kelly bears ample testimony to the extraordinary free use made of proverbs in his time by his countrymen and by himself. He says that 'there were current in society upwards of 3000 proverbs, exclusively Scottish.' He adds, 'The Scots are wonderfully given to this way of speaking, and as the consequence of that, abound with proverbs, many of which are very expressive, quick, and home to the purpose; and, indeed, this humour prevails universally over the whole nation, especially among the better sort of the commonality, none of whom will discourse with you any considerable time, but he will affirm every assertion and observation with a Scottish proverb. To that nation I owe my birth and education; and to that manner of speaking I was used from my infancy to such a degree that I became in some measure remarkable for it.' This was written in 1721, and we may see from Mr Kelly's account what a change has taken place in society as regards this mode of intercourse. Our author states that he has 'omitted in his collection many popular proverbs which are very pat

[1] This was pointed out to me by our present Lord Provost, who kindly supplied me with the 3 vol. edition.

and expressive,' and adds as his reason, that 'since it does not become a man of manners to use them, it does not become a man of my age and profession to write them.' What were Mr Kelly's profession or age do not appear from any statements of his volume; but, judging by many proverbs which he has *retained*, those which consideration of years and of profession induced him to omit must have been bad indeed, and unbecoming for *any* age or *any* profession.[1] The third collection by Mr Fergusson is mentioned by Kelly as the only one which had been made before his time, and that he had not met with it till he had made considerable progress in his own collection. The book is now extremely rare, and fetches a high price. By the great kindness of the learned librarian, I have been permitted to see the copy belonging to the library of the Writers to the Signet. It is the first edition, and very rare. A quaint little thin volume, such as delight the eyes of true bibliomaniacs, unpaged, and published at Edinburgh, 1641—although on the title-page the proverbs are said to have been collected at Mr Fergusson's death, 1598.[2] There is no preface or notice by the author, but an address from the printer 'to the merrie, judicious, and discreet reader.'

The proverbs, amounting to 945, are given without any comment or explanation; many of them are of a very antique cast of language; indeed, some would be to most persons quite unintelligible without a lexicon.

The printer, in this address 'to the merrie, judicious, and discreet reader,' refers in the following quaint expressions to the author: 'Therefore manie in this realme that hath hard of David Fergusson, sometime minister at Dunfermline, and of his quick answers and speeches, both to great persons and others inferiours, and hath heard of his proverbs which hee gathered together in

[1] Kelly's book is constantly quoted by Jamieson, and is, indeed, an excellent work for the study of good old Scotch.

[2] This probably throws back the collection to about the middle of the century.

his time, and now we put downe according to the order of the alphabet; and manie of all ranks of persons, being verie desirous to have the said proverbs, I have thought good to put them to the presse for thy better satisfaction. . . . I know that there may be some that will say and marvel, that a minister should have taken pains to gather such proverbs together; but they that knew his forme of powerfull preaching the word, and his ordinar talking, ever almost using proverbiall speeches, will not finde fault with this that hee hath done. And whereas there are some old Scottish words not in use now, bear with that, because if ye alter those words, the proverb will have no grace; and so, recommending these proverbs to thy good use, I bid thee farewell.'

I now subjoin a few of Fergusson's Proverbs, verbatim, which are of a more obsolete character, and have appended explanations, for the correctness of which, however, I am not quite confident:

A year a nurish,[1] *seven year a da.*[2] Refers, I presume, to fulfilling the maternal office.

Anes payit never cravit. Debts once paid give no more trouble.

All wald[3] *have all, all wald forgive.*[4] Those who exact much should be ready to concede.

A gangang[5] *fit*[6] *is aye*[7] *gettin* (*gin*[8] *it were but a thorn*). A man of industry will certainly get a living, though the proverb is often applied to those who went abroad and got a mischief when they might safely have stayed at home.—(Kelly.)

All crakes,[9] *all bears.*[10] Spoken against bullies who keep a great hectoring, and yet, when put to it, tamely pocket an affront.—(Kelly.)

Bourd[11] *not wi bawtie*[12] (*lest he bite you*). Do not jest too familiarly with your superiors (Kelly), or with dangerous characters.

[1] Nurse. [2] Daw, a slut. [3] Would. [4] Forgive.
[5] Going or moving. [6] Foot. [7] Always. [8] If.
[9] Boasters. [10] Used as cowards (?). [11] Jest. [12] A dog's name.

Bread's house, skailed never.[1] While people have bread they need not give up housekeeping. Spoken when one has bread and wishes something better.—(Kelly.)

Crabbit[2] *was, and cause had.* Spoken ironically of persons put out of temper without adequate cause.

Dame deem[3] *warily* (*ye watna*[4] *wha wytes*[5] *yersel*). Spoken to remind those who pass harsh censures on others that they may themselves be censured.

Efter lang mint[6] *never dint.*[7] Spoken of long and painful labour producing little effect. Kelly's reading is '*Lang mint little dint.*'[8] Spoken when men threaten much and dare not execute.—(Kelly.)

Fill fou[9] *and haud*[10] *fou makes a stark*[11] *man.* In border language a *stark* man was one who takes and keeps boldly.

He that crabbs[12] *without cause should smease*[13] *without mends.*[14] Spoken to remind those who are angry without cause, that they should not be particular in requiring apologies from others.

He is worth na weill that may not byde na wae. He deserves not the sweet that will not taste the sour. He does not deserve prosperity who cannot meet adversity.

Kame[15] *sindle*[16] *kame sair.*[17] Applied to those who forbear for a while, but when once roused can act with severity.

Kamesters[18] *are aye creeshie.*[19] It is usual for men to look like their trade.

Let alone makes mony lurden.[20] Want of correction makes many a bad boy.—(Kelly.)

Mony tynes[21] *the halfe mark*[22] *whinger*[23] (*for the halfe pennie whang*[24]). Another version of penny wise and pound foolish.

[1] To skail house, to disfurnish. [2] Being angry or cross. [3] Judge. [4] Know not. [5] Blames. [6] Endeavour. [7] Opportunity. [8] Offering or threatening. [9] Full. [10] Hold. [11] Potent or strong. [12] Is angry. [13] Settle. [14] Amends. [15] Comb. [16] Seldom. [17] Painfully. [18] Wool combers. [19] Greasy. [20] Worthless fellow. [21] Loses. [22] Sixpenny. [23] Knife. [24] Thong.

No plie[1] *is best.*

Reavers[2] *should not be rewers.*[3] Those who are so fond of a thing as to snap at it, should not repent when they have got it.—(Kelly.)

Sok and seill is best. The meaning of this proverb is obscure. Later writers do not appear to have adopted it from Fergusson. It is quite clear that Sok or Sock is the ploughshare. Seil is happiness, as in Kelly. 'Seil comes out till sorrow be o'er;' and in Aberdeen they say 'Seil o' your face,' to express a blessing. My reading is 'The plough and happiness the best lot.' The happiest life is the healthy country one. See Burns' song with the chorus:

> Up wi' my ploughman lad,
> And hey my merry ploughman,
> Of a' the trades that I do ken,
> Commend me to the ploughman.

There mae[4] *madines*[5] *nor makine.*[6] Girls are more plentiful in the world than hares.

Ye bried[7] *of the gouk*[8] *ye have not a rhyme*[9] *but ane.* Applied to persons who tire everybody by constantly harping on one subject.

The collection by Allan Ramsay is very good, and professes to correct the errors of some former collectors. The number of proverbs is about 700. Some proverbs in this collection I do not find in others, and one quality it possesses in a remarkable degree—it is very Scotch. The language of the proverbial wisdom has the true Scottish flavour; not only is this the case with the proverbs themselves, but the dedication to the tenantry of Scotland, prefixed to the collection, is written in pure Scottish dialect. From this dedication I make an extract, which falls in with our plan of recording Scotch reminiscences, as Allan Ramsay there states the great value set upon proverbs in his day, and the importance

[1] No lawsuit. [2] Robbers. [3] Rue, to repent. [4] More.
[5] Maidens. [6] Hares. [7] Take after. [8] Cuckoo. [9] Note.

which he attaches to them as teachers of moral wisdom, and as combining amusement with instruction. The prose of Allan Ramsay has, too, a spice of his poetry in its composition:

'As naething helps our happiness mair than to hae the mind made up wi' right principles, I desire you, for the thriving an' pleasure of you and yours, to use your een an' len your lugs to these guid *auld says*, that shine wi' waled sense, and will as lang as the warld wags. Gar your bairns get them by heart; let them hae a place amang your family bukes, an' may nere a window sole thro' the country be withoot them; on a spare hour, when the day is clear, behind a ruck, or on the green howm, draw the treasure frae your poutch, an' enjoy the pleasant companion. Ye happy herds, while your hirsels are feeding on the flowery braes, you may eithly mak yoursells maisters o' the hale some. How usefu' will it prove to you (wha hae sae few opportunities o' common clattering) whan ye forgather wi' your freends at kirk or market, banquet or bridal! By your proficiency you'll be able, in the proverbial way, to keep up the saul o' a conversation that is baith blythe an' usefu'.'

Mr. Henderson's work is a compilation from those already mentioned. It is very copious, and the introductory essay contains some excellent remarks upon the wisdom and wit of Scottish proverbial sayings.

Mr Stirling's address, like everything he writes, indicates a minute and profound knowledge of his subject, and is full of picturesque and just views of human nature. He attaches much importance to the teaching conveyed in proverbial expressions, and recommends his hearers even still to collect such proverbial expressions as may yet linger in conversation, because, as he observes, 'If it is not yet registered, it is possible that it might have died with the tongue from which you took it, and so have been lost for ever.' 'I believe,' he adds, 'the number of good old saws still floating as waifs and

strays on the tide of popular talk to be much greater than might at first appear.'

One remark is applicable to all these collections, viz. that out of so large a number there are many of them on which we have little grounds for deciding that they are *exclusively* Scottish. In fact, some are mere translations of proverbs adopted by many nations; some of universal adoption. Thus we have:

A burnt bairn fire dreads.
Ae swallow maks nae simmer.
Faint heart neer wan fair lady.
Ill weeds wax weel.
Mony smas mak a muckle.
O twa ills chuse the least.
Set a knave to grip a knave.
Twa wits are better than ane.
There's nae jule to an auld jule.
Ye canna mak a silk purse o' a sow's lug.
Ae bird i' the hand is worth twa flecing.
Mony cooks neer made gude kail.

Of numerous proverbs such as these, some may or may not be original in the Scottish. Mr Stirling remarks, that many of the best and oldest proverbs may be common to all—may have occurred to all. In our national collections, therefore, some of the proverbs recorded may be simply translations into Scotch of what have been long considered the property of other nations. Still, I hope, it is not a mere national partiality to say that many of the common proverbs *gain* much by such translation from other tongues. All that I would attempt now is, to select some of our more popular proverbial sayings, which many of us can remember as current amongst us, and were much used by the late generation in society, and to add a few from the collections I have named, which bear a very decided Scottish stamp either in turn of thought or in turn of language.

I remember being much struck the first time I heard the application of that pretty Scottish saying regarding a fair bride. I was walking in Montrose, a day or two before her marriage, with a young lady, a connection of mine, when she was kindly accosted by an old friend, an honest fishwife of the town: 'Weel, Miss Elizabeth, hae ye gotten a' yer claes ready;' to which the young lady modestly answered, 'Oh, Janet, my claes are soon got ready.' To which Janet replied in the old Scottish proverb: 'Ay, weel, *a bonny bride's sune busket.*'[1] In the old collection, an addition less sentimental is made to this proverb, *A short horse is sune wispit.*[2]

To encourage strenuous exertions to meet difficult circumstances, is well expressed by *Setting a stout heart to a stay brae.* This mode of expressing that the worth of a handsome woman outweighs even her beauty has a very Scottish character: *She's better than she's bonny.* The frequent evil to harvest operations from autumnal rains and fogs in Scotland, is well told in the saying *A dry summer ne'er made a dear peck.*

There can be no question as to country in the following, which seems to express generally that persons may have the name and appearance of greatness without the reality: *A' Stuarts are na sib*[3] *to the king.*

There is an excellent Scottish version of the common proverb 'He that's born to be hanged will never be drowned'—*The water will never warr*[4] *the widdie,* i.e. never cheat the gallows. This saying received a very naïve practical application during the anxiety and alarm of a storm. One of the passengers, a good simple-minded minister, was sharing the alarm that was felt round him, until, spying one of his parishioners, of whose ignominious end he had long felt persuaded, exclaimed to himself 'O, we are all safe now,' and accordingly accosted the poor man with strong assurances of the great pleasure he had in seeing him on board.

It's ill getting the breeks aff the Highlandman is a proverb

[1] Attired. [2] Curried. [3] Related. [4] Outrun.

that savours very strong of a Lowland Scotch origin. Having suffered loss at the hands of their neighbours from the hills, this was a mode of expressing the painful truth, that there was little hope of obtaining redress from those who had not the means of supplying it.

Proverbs connected with the bagpipes I set down as legitimate Scotch, as thus: *Ye are as lang in tuning your pipes as anither would play a spring.*[1] You are as long in setting about a thing as another would be in doing it.

There is a set of Scottish proverbs which we may group together as containing one quality in common, and that in reference to the Evil Spirit, and to his agency in the world. This is a reference often, I fear, too lightly made; but I am not conscious of anything deliberately profane or irreverent in the following:

The deil's nae sae ill as he's caaed. The most of people may be found to have some redeeming good point; applied in *Guy Mannering* by the Deacon to Gilbert Glossin, upon his intimating his intention to come to his shop soon for the purpose of laying in his winter stock of groceries.

To the same effect: *It's a sin to lee on the deil.* Even of the worst people, *truth* at least should be spoken.

He should hae a lang-shafted spune that sups kail wi' the deil. He should be well guarded and well protected that has to do with cunning and unprincipled men.

Lang ere the deil dee by the dyke-side. Spoken when the improbable death of some powerful person is talked of.

Let ae deil ding anither. Spoken when two bad persons are at variance over some evil work.

The deil's bairns hae deil's luck. Spoken enviously when ill people prosper.

The deil's a busy bishop in his ain diocio. Bad men are sure to be active in promoting their own bad ends. A quaint proverb of this class I have been told of as

[1] Tune.

coming from the reminiscences of an old lady of quality, to recommend a courteous manner to every one: *It's aye guid to be ceevil, as the auld wife said when she beckit*[1] *to the deevil.*

Raise nae mair deils than ye are able to lay. Provoke no strifes which ye may be unable to appease.

The deil's aye guid to his ain. A malicious proverb, spoken as if those whom we disparage were deriving their success from bad causes.

Ye wad do little for God an' the deevil was dead. A sarcastic mode of telling a person that fear, rather than love or principle, is the motive to his good conduct.

In the old collection already referred to, is a proverb which I quote unwillingly, and yet which I do not like to omit. It is doubtful against whom it took its origin, whether as a satire against the decanal order in general, or against some obnoxious dean in particular: *The Deil an' the dean begin wi' ae letter. When the Deil has the Dean the kirk will be the better.*

The deil's gane ower Jock Wabster, is a saying which I have been accustomed to in my part of the country from early years. It expresses generally misfortune or confusion, but I am not quite sure of the *exact* meaning, or who is represented by Jock Wabster. It was a great favourite with Sir Walter Scott, who quotes it twice in *Rob Roy.* Allan Ramsay introduces it in the Gentle Shepherd to express the misery of married life when the first dream of love has passed away:

The 'Deil gaes ower Jock Wabster,' hame grows hell,
When Pate misca's ye waur than tongue can tell.

It's ill to wauken sleeping dogs. It is bad policy to rouse dangerous and mischievous people, who are for the present quiet.

It is na mair pitie to see a woman greit nor to see a goose go barefit. A harsh and ungallant reference to the

[1] Curtsied.

facility with which the softer sex can avail themselves of tears to carry a point.

A Scots mist will weet an Englishman to the skin. A proverb evidently of Caledonian origin, arising from the frequent complaints made by English visitors of the heavy mists which hang about our hills, and which are found to annoy the Southern traveller as it were downright rain.

Keep your ain fish guts to your ain sea maws. This was a favourite proverb with Sir Walter Scott when he meant to express the policy of first considering the interests that are nearest home. The saying savours of the fishing population of the east coast.

A Yule feast may be done at Pasch. Festivities, although usually practised at Christmas, need not, on suitable occasions, be confined to any season.

It's better to sup wi' a cutty than want a spune. Cutty means anything short, stumpy, and not of full growth; frequently applied to a short-handled horn spoon. As Meg Merrilies says to the bewildered Dominie: 'If ye dinna eat instantly, by the bread and salt, I'll put it down your throat wi' the *cutty spune.*'

'*Fules mak feasts and wise men eat 'em,* my Lord.' This was said to a Scottish nobleman on his giving a great entertainment, and who readily answered 'Ay, and *Wise men make proverbs and fools repeat 'em.*'

A green Yule makes a fat kirk-yard. A shocking mode of expressing that mild weather at Christmas is unhealthy. The truth of the proverb is as questionable as the phraseology.

Wha will bell the cat? The proverb is used in reference to a proposal for accomplishing a difficult or dangerous task, and alludes to the fable of the poor mice proposing to put a bell about the cat's neck, that they might be apprised of his coming. The historical application is well known. When the nobles of Scotland proposed to go in a body to Stirling to take Spence, the favourite of James the Third, and hang him, the Lord

Gray asked, 'It is well said, but wha will bell the cat?' The Earl of Angus accepted the challenge, and effected the object. To his dying day he was called Archibald Bell-the-Cat.

Ye hae tint the tongue o' the trump. 'Trump' is a Jew's harp. To lose the tongue of it is to lose what is essential to its sound.

Meat and mass hinders nae man. Needful food, and suitable religious exercises, should not be spared under greatest haste.

Ye fand it whar the highlandman fand the tangs. A hit at our mountain neighbours, who occasionally took from the Lowlands, as having found, something that was never *lost.*

His head will ne'er fill his father's bonnet. A picturesque way of expressing that the son will never equal the influence and ability of his sire.

His bark is waur nor his bite. A good-natured apology for one who is good-hearted and rough in speech.

Do as the cow of Forfar did, tak a standing drink. This proverb relates to an occurrence which gave rise to a law-suit and a whimsical legal decision. A woman in Forfar, who was brewing, set out her tub of beer to cool. A cow came by and drank it up. The owner of the cow was sued for compensation, but the bailies of Forfar, who tried the case, acquitted the owner of the cow on the ground that the farewell drink, called in the Highlands the *dochan dorach* or stirrup cup, taken by the guest standing at the door, was never charged, and as the cow had taken but a standing drink outside, it could not, according to Scottish usage, be chargeable. Sir Walter Scott has humorously alluded to this circumstance in the notes to *Waverley,* but has not mentioned it as the subject of an old Scotch proverb.

Bannocks are better nor nae kind o' bread. Evidently Scottish. Better have oatmeal cakes to eat than be in want of wheaten loaves.

Folly is a bonny dog. Meaning, I suppose, that many

are imposed upon by the false appearances and attractions of vicious pleasures.

'*The e'ening brings a' hame*, is an interesting saying, meaning, that the evening of life, or the approach of death, softens many of our political and religious differences. I do not find the proverb in the older collections, but Mr Stirling justly calls it 'a beautiful proverb, which, lending itself to various uses, may be taken as an expression of faith in the gradual growth and spread of large-hearted Christian charity, the noblest result of our happy freedom of thought and discussion.' A similar graceful and moral saying inculcates an acknowledgment of gratitude for the past favours which we have enjoyed when we come to the close of the day or the close of life:

Ruse[1] *the fair day at e'en.*

A very learned and esteemed friend has suggested another reading of this proverb, in accordance with the celebrated saying of Solon, given by Aristotle, *Ethic. Nic.* i. 10: κατὰ Σόλωνα χρέων τέλος ὁρᾶν, Do not praise the fairness of the day till evening; do not call the life happy till you have seen the close; or, in other matters, do not boast that all is well till you have conducted your undertaking to a prosperous end.

Let him tak a spring on his ain fiddle. Spoken of a foolish and unreasonable person. We will for the present allow him to have his own way. Bailie Nicol Jarvie quotes the proverb with great bitterness, when he warns his opponent that *his* time for triumph will come ere long:—'Aweel, aweel, sir, you're welcome to a tune on your ain fiddle; but see if I dinna gar ye dance till't afore it's dune.'

The kirk is meikle, but you may say mass in'ae end o't; or, as I have received it in another form, 'If we canna preach in the kirk, we can sing mass in the quire.' This intimates, where something is alleged to be too much,

[1] Praise.

that you need take no more than what you have need for. I heard the proverb used in this sense by Sir Walter Scott at his own table. His son had complained of some quaighs which Sir Walter had produced for a dram after dinner, that they were too large. His answer was 'Well, Walter, as my good mother used to say, if the kirk is ower big, just sing mass in the quire.' Here is another reference to kirk and quire: *He rives*[1] *the kirk to theik*[2] *the quire.* Spoken of unprofitable persons, who, in the English proverb, 'Rob Peter to pay Paul.'

The king's errand may come the cadger's gate yet. A great man may need the service of a very mean one.

The maut is aboon the meal. His liquor has done more for him than his meat. The man is drunk.

Mak a kirk and a mill o't. Turn a thing to any purpose you like; or rather, spoken sarcastically, Take it, and make the best of it.

Like a sow playing on a trump. No image could be well more incongruous than a pig performing on a Jew's harp.

Mair by luck than gude guiding. His success is due to his fortunate circumstances, rather than to his own discretion.

He's not a man to ride the water wi'. A common Scottish saying to express you cannot trust such an one in trying times. May have arisen from the districts where fords abounded, and the crossing them was dangerous.

He rides on the riggin o' the kirk. The riggin being the top of the roof, the proverb used to be applied to those who carried their zeal for church matters to the extreme point.

Leal heart never leed, well expresses that an honest loyal disposition will scorn, under all circumstances, to tell a falsehood.

A common Scottish proverb, *Let that flee stick to the*

[1] Tears. [2] Thatch.

wa', has an obvious meaning :—'Say nothing more on that subject.' But the derivation is not obvious.[1] In like manner, the meaning of *He that will to Cupar maun to Cupar*, is clearly that if a man is obstinate, and bent upon his dangerous course, he must take it. But why Cupar? and whether is it the Cupar of Angus or the Cupar of Fife?

Kindness creeps where it canna gang, prettily expresses that where love can do little, it will do that little though it cannot do more.

In my part of the country a ridiculous addition used to be made to the common Scottish saying, *Mony a thing's made for the penny*, i.e. many contrivances are thought of to get money. The addition is 'As the old woman said when she saw a black man'—taking it for granted that *he* was an ingenious and curious piece of mechanism made for profit.

Bluid is thicker than water is a proverb which has a marked Scottish aspect, as meant to vindicate those family predilections to which, as a nation, we are supposed to be rather strongly inclined.

There's aye water where the stirkie[2] *drouns.* Where certain effects are produced, there must be some causes at work—a proverb used to show that a universal popular suspicion as to an obvious effect must be laid in truth.

Better a finger aff than aye waggin'. This proverb I remember as a great favourite with many Scotch people. Better experience the worst than have an evil always pending.

Cadgers are aye cracking o' crock-saddles[3] has a very Scottish aspect, and signifies that professional men are very apt to talk too much of their professions.

[1] It has been suggested, and with much reason, that the reference is to a flee sticking on a wet or a newly painted wall; this is corroborated by the addition in *Rob Roy*, 'When the dirt's dry, it will rub out,' which seems to point out the meaning and derivation of the proverb.

[2] A young bullock.

[3] Saddle for supporting panniers.

I will conclude this notice of our proverbial reminiscences, by adding a cluster of Scottish proverbs, selected from an excellent article on the general subject in *The North British Review* of February 1858. The reviewer designates these as 'broader in their mirth, and more caustic in their tone' than the moral proverbial expressions of the Spanish and Italian:

A blate[1] *cat maks a proud mouse.*
Better a toom[2] *house than an ill tenant.*
Jouk[3] *and let the jaw*[4] *gang by.*
Mony ane speirs the gate[5] *he kens fu' weel.*
The tod[6] *ne'er sped better than when he gaed his ain errand.*
A wilfu' man should be unco wise.
He that has a meikle nose thinks ilka ane speaks o't.
He that teaches himsel has a fule for his maister.
It is an ill cause that the lawyer thinks shame o'.
Lippen[7] *to me, but look to yoursell.*
Mair whistle than woo, as the souter said when shearing the soo.
Ye gae far about seeking the nearest.
Ye'll no sell yer hen in a rainy day.
Ye'll mend when ye grow better.
Ye're nae chicken for a' your cheepin.[8]

I have now given quite sufficient specimens to convince those who may not have given attention to the subject, how much of wisdom, knowledge of life, and good feeling, are contained in these aphorisms which compose the mass of our Scottish proverbial sayings. No doubt, to many of my younger readers, proverbs are little known, and to all they are becoming more and more matters of reminiscence. I am quite convinced that much of the old quaint and characteristic Scottish talk which we are now endeavouring to recall, depended

[1] Shy. [2] Empty. [3] Stoop down. [4] Wave.
[5] The way. [6] Fox. [7] Trust to. [8] Chirping.

on a happy use of those abstracts of moral sentiment. And this feeling will be confirmed when we call to mind how often those whom we ourselves admired of the old Scottish school of character, availed themselves of the use of its proverbial philosophy.

CHAPTER V

ON SCOTTISH STORIES OF WIT AND HUMOUR

THE portion of our subject which we proposed under the head of *Reminiscences of Scottish Stories of Wit or Humour* yet remains to be considered. This is closely connected with the question of Scottish dialect and expressions; indeed, on some points hardly separable, as the wit, to a great extent, proceeds from the quaint and picturesque modes of expressing it. But here we are met by a difficulty. On high authority it has been declared that no such thing as wit exists amongst us. What has no existence can have no change. We cannot be said to have lost a quality which we never possessed. Many of my readers are no doubt familiar with what Sydney Smith declared on this point, and certainly on the question of wit he must be considered an authority. He used to say (I am almost ashamed to repeat it), 'It requires a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scotch understanding. Their only idea of wit, which prevails occasionally in the north, and which, under the name of WUT, is so infinitely distressing to people of good taste, is laughing immoderately at stated intervals.' Strange language to use of a country which has produced Smollett, Burns, Scott, Galt, and Wilson, all remarkable for the humour diffused through their writings. Indeed, we may fairly ask, have they equals in this respect amongst English writers? Charles Lamb had the same notion, or, I should rather say, the same prejudice, about Scottish people not being accessible to wit; and he tells a story of what happened to himself in corroboration of

the opinion. He had been asked to a party, and one object of the invitation had been to meet a son of Burns. When he arrived, Mr Burns had not made his appearance, and in the course of conversation regarding the family of the poet, Lamb, in his lackadaisical kind of manner, said, 'I wish it had been the father instead of the son;' upon which four Scotchmen present with one voice exclaimed, 'That's impossible, for *he's* dead.'[1] Now, there will be dull men and matter-of-fact men everywhere who do not take a joke or enter into a jocular allusion; but surely, as a general remark, this is far from being a natural quality of our country. Sydney Smith and Charles Lamb say so. But at the risk of being considered presumptuous, I will say I think them entirely mistaken. I should say that there was, on the contrary, a strong *connection* between the Scottish temperament, and, call it it you like, humour if it is not wit. And what is the difference? My readers need not be afraid that they are to be led through a labyrinth of metaphysical distinctions between wit and humour. I have read Dr Campbell's dissertation on the difference in his philosophy of rhetoric, I have read S. Smith's own two lectures, but I confess I am not much the wiser. Professors of rhetoric, no doubt, must have such discussions, but when you wish to be amused by the thing itself, it is somewhat disappointing to be presented with metaphysical analysis. It is like instituting an examination of the glass and cork of a champagne bottle, and a chemical testing of the wine. In the very process the volatile and sparkling draught which was to delight the palate, has become like ditch water, vapid and dead. What I mean is, that, call it wit or humour, or what you please, there is a school of Scottish pleasantry, amusing and char-

[1] After all, the remark may not have been so absurd then as it appears now. Burns had not been long dead, nor was he then so noted a character as he is now. The Scotchmen might really have supposed a Southerner unacquainted with the *fact* of the poet's death.

acteristic beyond all other. Don't talk of its nature, or the qualities of which it is composed; enjoy its quaint and amusing flow of oddity and fun; as we may, for instance, suppose it to have flowed on that eventful night so joyously described by Burns:

> The souter tauld his quecrest stories,
> The landlord's laugh was ready chorus.

Or we may think of the delight it gave the good Mr Balwhidder, when he tells, in his Annals of the Parish, of some such story, that it was a 'jocosity that was just a kittle to hear.' When I speak of changes in such Scottish humour which have taken place, I refer to a particular sort of humour, and I speak of the sort of feeling that belongs to Scottish pleasantry—which is sly, and cheery, and pawky. It is, undoubtedly, a humour that depends a good deal upon the vehicle in which the story is conveyed. If, as we have said, our quaint dialect is passing away, and our national eccentric points of character, we must expect to find much of the peculiar humour allied with them to have passed away also. In other departments of wit and repartee, and acute hits at men and things, Scotchmen (whatever S. Smith may have said to the contrary) are equal to their neighbours, and, so far as I know, may have gained rather than lost. But this peculiar humour of which I now speak, has not, in our day, the scope and development which were permitted to it by the former generation. Where the tendency exists, the exercise of it is kept down by the usages and feelings of society. For examples of it (in its full force at any rate) we must go back to a race who are departed. One remark, however, has occurred to me in regard to the specimens we have of this kind of humour, viz., that they do not always proceed from the wit or the cleverness of any of the individuals concerned in them. The amusement comes from the circumstances, from

the concurrence or combination of the ideas, and in many cases from the expressions which describe the facts. The humour of the narrative is unquestionable, and yet no one has tried to be humorous. In short, it is the *Scottishness* that gives the zest. The same ideas differently expounded might have no point at all. There is, for example, something highly original in the notions of celestial mechanics entertained by an honest Scottish Fife lass regarding the theory of comets. Having occasion to go out after dark, and having observed the brilliant comet of last year (1858), she ran in with breathless haste to the house, calling on her fellow-servants to 'Come oot and see a new star that hasna got its tail cuttit aff yet!' Exquisite astronomical speculation! Stars, like puppies, are born with tails, and in due time have them docked. Take an example of a story where there is no display of any one's wit or humour, and yet it is a good story, and one can't exactly say why. An English traveller had gone on a fine Highland road so long, without having seen an indication of fellow-travellers, that he became astonished at the solitude of the country; and no doubt before the Highlands were so much frequented as they are in our time, the roads had a very striking aspect of solitariness. Our traveller at last coming up to an old man breaking stones, he asked him if there was any traffic in this road—was it at *all* frequented? 'Ay,' he said, 'it's no ill at that; there was a cadger body yestreen, and there's yoursell the day.' No English version of the story could have half such amusement, or half so quaint a character. An answer, even still more characteristic, is recorded to have been given by a countryman to a traveller. Being doubtful of his way, he inquired if he were on the right road to Dunkeld. With some of his national inquisitiveness about strangers, the countryman asked his inquirer where he came from. Offended at the liberty, as he considered it, he sharply reminded the man that where he came from was nothing

to him; but all the answer he got was the quiet rejoinder, 'Indeed, it's just as little to me whar ye'r gaen'.' A friend has told me of an answer highly characteristic of this dry and unconcerned quality which he heard given to a fellow-traveller. A gentleman sitting opposite to him in the stage-coach at Berwick, complained bitterly that the cushion on which he sat was quite wet. On looking up to the roof he saw a hole through which the rain descended copiously, and at once accounted for the mischief. He called for the coachman, and in great wrath reproached him with the evil under which he suffered, and pointed to the hole which was the cause of it. All the satisfaction, however, that he got was the quiet unmoved reply, 'Ay, mony a ane has complained o' *that* hole.' Another anecdote I heard from a gentleman who vouched for the truth, which is just a case where the narrative has its humour, not from the wit which is displayed, but from that dry matter-of-fact view of things peculiar to some of our countrymen. The friend of my informant was walking in a street of Perth, when, to his horror, he saw a workman fall from a roof where he was mending slates, right upon the pavement. By extraordinary good fortune he was not killed, and, on the gentleman going up to his assistance and exclaiming with much excitement, 'God bless me, are you much hurt?' all the answer he got was the cool rejoinder, 'On the contrary, sir.' A similar matter-of-fact answer was made by one of the old race of Montrose humorists. He was coming out of church, and in the press of the kirk *skailing*, a young man thoughtlessly trod on the old gentleman's toe, which was tender with corns. He hastened to apologize, saying, 'I am very sorry, sir; I beg your pardon.' The only acknowledgment of which was the dry answer, 'And ye've as muckle need, sir.'

The national humorous quality of which we now speak is occasionally latent in characters where we should

hardly expect it, and is often developed in very early life. To a distinguished member of the Church of Scotland I am indebted for an excellent story of quaint child humour, which he had from the lips of an old woman who related the story of herself—When a girl of eight years of age, she was taken by her grandmother to church. The parish minister was not only a long preacher, but, as the custom was, delivered two sermons on the Sabbath day, and thus saved the parishioners the two journeys to church. Elizabeth was sufficiently wearied before the close of the first discourse, but when, after singing and prayer, the good minister opened the Bible, read a second text, and prepared to give a second sermon, the young girl, being both tired and hungry, lost all patience, and cried out to her grandmother, to the no small amusement of those who were so near as to hear her, 'Come awa, granny, and gang hame, this is a lang grace and nae meat.' The Duke of Buccleuch told me an anecdote of an answer very quaintly Scottish, given to his grandmother by a farmer of the old school. There had been a dinner of some of the tenantry in the time of Duke Henry. His Duchess (the last descendant of the Dukes of Montague) always appeared at table on such occasions, and did the honours with that dignity and affable kindness for which she was so remarkable. Abundant hospitality was exercised towards the guests. The Duchess observed one of the farmers supplied with boiled beef from a noble round, and, with marked attention, proposed that he should add a supply of cabbage; on his declining, the Duchess good-humouredly remarked, 'Why, boiled beef and greens seem so naturally to go together, I wonder you don't take it.' The honest farmer replied, 'Ay, but your Grace maun alloo it's a very *windy* vegetable,' in delicate allusion to the flatulent quality of the esculent. Amongst the lower orders humour is found, occasionally, very rich in mere children, and I recollect a remarkable illustration of this early native humour occurring in a family in Forfar-

shire, where I used, in former days, to be very intimate. A wretched woman, who used to traverse the country as a beggar or tramp, left a poor, half-starved little girl by the roadside, near the house of my friends. Always ready to assist the unfortunate, they took charge of the child, and as she grew a little older, they began to give her some education, and taught her to read. She soon made some progress in reading the Bible, and the native odd humour, of which we speak, began soon to show itself. On reading the passage which began 'Then David rose,' etc., the child stopped, and looked up knowingly, to say, 'I ken wha that was,' and, on being asked what she could mean, she confidently said, 'That's David Rowse the pleuchman.' And, again reading the passage where the words occur 'He took Paul's girdle,' the child said with much confidence, 'I ken what he took that for,' and on being asked to explain, replied at once, 'To bake's bannocks on,' 'girdle' being, in the north, the name for the iron plate hung over the fire, for making oat cakes or bannocks.

A facetious and acute friend of mine, who rather leans to the S. Smith view of Scottish wit, declares that all our humorous stories are about lairds, and about lairds who are drunk. Of such stories there are certainly not a few. One of the best belonged to my part of the country, and to many persons I should perhaps apologize for introducing it at all. The story has been told of various parties and localities, but no doubt the genuine laird was a laird of Balnamoon, and that the locality was a wild tract of land, not far from his place called Munrimmon Moor. Balnamoon had been dining out in the neighbourhood, where, by mistake, they had put down to him after dinner cherry brandy, instead of port wine, his usual beverage. The rich flavour and strength so pleased him, that, having tasted it, he would have nothing else. On rising from table, therefore, the laird would be more affected by his drink than if he had taken his ordinary allowance of port. His servant Harry,

or Hairy,[1] was to drive him home in a gig or whisky, as it was called, the usual open carriage of the time. On crossing the moor, however, whether from greater exposure to the blast, or from the laird's unsteadiness of head, his hat and wig came off and fell upon the ground. Harry got out to pick them up and restore them to his master. The laird was satisfied with the hat, but demurred at the wig. 'It's no my wig, Hairy, lad; it's no my wig,' and refused to have anything to do with it. Hairy lost his patience, and anxious to get home, remonstrated with his master, 'Ye'd better tak it, sir, for there's nae waile o' wigs on Munrimmon Moor.' The humour of the argument is exquisite, putting to the laird, in his unreasonable objection, the sly insinuation that in such a locality, if he did not take *this* wig, he was not likely to find another. Then, what a rich expression, 'waile o' wigs.' In English what is it? 'A choice of perukes.' There is nothing in the English comparable to the 'waile o' wigs.' Since the last edition, however, of these Reminiscences, I have received an amusing sequel to the story—after the affair of the wig had been settled, and the laird had consented to return home. When the whisky drove up to the door, Hairy, sitting in front, told the servant who came to 'tak out the laird.' No laird was to be seen; and it appeared that he had fallen out on the moor without Hairy observing it. Of course, they went back, and, picking him up, brought him safe home. A neighbouring laird having called a few days after, and having referred to the accident, Balnamoon quietly added, 'Indeed, I maun hae a lume[2] that'll *had in.*' The late Lady Dalhousie, mother, I mean, of the present distinguished Peer, used to tell a characteristic anecdote of her day. But here, on mention of the name Christian, Countess of Dalhousie,

[1] In corroboration of the genuineness and authenticity of the story, I am assured by a correspondent that he knows the name of the servant was *not* Hairy; but I have mislaid the reference.

[2] A vessel.

may I pause a moment to recall the memory of one who was a very remarkable person. She was, for many years, to me and mine, a sincere and true and valuable friend. By an awful dispensation of God's providence, she died *instantaneously* under my roof in 1839. Lady Dalhousie was eminently distinguished for a fund of the most varied knowledge, for a clear and powerful judgment, for acute observation, a kind heart, a brilliant wit. The story was thus: A Scottish judge, somewhat in the predicament of the Laird of Balnamoon, had dined at Coalstoun with her father Charles Brown, an advocate, and son of George Brown, who sat in the Supreme Court as a Judge with the title of Lord Coalstoun. The party had been convivial, as we know parties of the highest legal characters often were in those days. When breaking up, and going to the drawing-room, one of them, not seeing his way very clearly, stepped out of the dining-room window, which was open to the summer air. The ground at Coalstoun sloping off from the house behind, the worthy judge got a great fall, and rolled down the bank. He contrived, however, as tipsy men generally do, to regain his legs, and was able to reach the drawing-room. The first remark he made was an innocent remonstrance with his friend the host: 'Od, Charlie Brown, what gars ye hae sik lang steps to your *front* door.' On Deeside, where many original stories had their origin, I recollect hearing several of an excellent and worthy, but very simple-minded man, the Laird of Craigmyle. On one occasion, when the beautiful and clever Jane, Duchess of Gordon, was scouring through the country, intent upon some of those electioneering schemes which often occupied her fertile imagination and active energies, she came to call at Craigmyle, and having heard that the laird was making bricks on the property, for the purpose of building a new garden wall, with her usual tact she opened the subject, and kindly asked, 'Well, Mr Gordon, and how do your bricks come on?' Good Craigmyle's thoughts were much occupied

with a new leather part of his dress, which he had lately constructed, so, looking down on his nether garments, he said, in pure Aberdeen dialect, 'Muckle obleeged to yer Grace, the breeks war sum ticht at first, but they are deeing weel eneuch noo.' The last laird of Macnab, before the clan finally broke up and emigrated to Canada, was a well-known character in the country, and, being poor, used to ride about on a most wretched horse, which gave occasion to many gibes at his expense. The laird was in the constant habit of riding up from the country to attend the Musselburgh races. A young wit, by way of playing him off on the race course, asked him in a contemptuous tone, 'Is that the same horse you had last year, Laird?' 'Na,' said the Laird, brandishing his whip in the interrogator's face in so emphatic a manner as to preclude further questioning, 'Na; but it's the same *whup*.' In those days, as might be expected, people were not nice in expressions of their dislike to persons or measures. If there be not more charity in society, there is certainly more courtesy. I have, from a friend, an anecdote illustrative of this remark, in regard to feelings exercised towards an unpopular laird. In the neighbourhood of Bamff, in Forfarshire, the seat of a very ancient family of the Ramsays, lived a proprietor who bore the appellation of Corb, from the name of his estate. The family has passed away and its property merged in Bamff. This laird was intensely disliked in the neighbourhood. Sir George Ramsay was, on the other hand, universally popular and respected. On one occasion, Sir George, in passing a morass in his own neighbourhood, had missed the road and fallen into a bog to an alarming depth. To his great relief, he saw a passenger coming along the path, which was at no great distance. He called loudly for his help, but the man took no notice. Poor Sir George felt himself sinking, and redoubled his cries for assistance; all at once the passenger rushed forward, carefully extricated him from his perilous posi-

tion, and politely apologized for his first neglect of his appeal, adding, as his reason, 'Indeed, Sir George, I thought it was Corb!' evidently meaning that *had* it been Corb, he must have taken his chance for him. Of another laird whom I heard often spoken of in old times, an anecdote was told strongly Scotch. Our friend had much difficulty (as many worthy lairds have had) in meeting the claims of those two woful periods of the year called with us in Scotland the 'tarmes.' He had been employing for some time as workman a stranger from the south on some house repairs, of the not uncommon name in England of Christmas. His servant early one morning called out at the laird's door in great excitement that Christmas had run away, and nobody knew where he had gone. He turned in his bed with the earnest ejaculation, 'I only wish he had taken Whitsunday and Martinmas along with him!' I have heard of an amusing scene between a laird celebrated for his saving propensities, and a wandering sort of Edie Ochiltree, a well-known itinerant, who lived by his wits and what he could pick up in his rounds amongst the houses of lairds and farmers. One thrifty laird having seen him sit down near his own gate to examine the contents of his poke or wallet, conjectured that he had come from the house, and so he drew near to see what he had carried off. As he was keenly investigating the mendicant's spoils, his quick eye detected some bones on which there remained more meat than should have been allowed to leave his kitchen. Accordingly he pounced upon the bones, and declared he had been robbed, and insisted on his returning to the house and giving back the spoil. The beggar was, however, prepared for the attack, and sturdily defended his property, boldly asserting, 'Na, na, laird, these are no Todbrae banes; these are Inch-Byre banes, and nane o' your honour's,' meaning that he had received these bones at the house of a neighbour of a more liberal character. But the beggar's professional discrimination between the bones of the two

mansions, and his pertinacious defence of his own property, would have been most amusing to a bystander.

I have, however, a reverse story, in which the beggar is quietly silenced by the proprietor. A noble lord, some generations back, well known for his frugal habits, had just picked up a small copper coin in his own avenue, and had been observed by one of the itinerating and mendicant race, who, grudging the transfer of the piece into the peer's pocket, exclaimed, 'O, gie't to me, my lord;' to which the quiet answer was 'Na, na; fin' a fardin for yersell, puir body.'

From a friend and near relative, a minister of the Established Church of Scotland, I used to hear many characteristic stories. He had a curious vein of this sort of humour in himself, besides what he brought out of others. One of his peculiarities was a mortal antipathy to the whole French nation, whom he frequently abused in no measured terms. At the same time he had great relish of a glass of claret, which he considered the prince of all social beverages. So he usually finished off his anti-gallican tirades with the reservation, 'But the bodies brew the braw drink.' He lived amongst his own people, and knew well the habits and peculiarities of a race gone by. He had many stories connected with the pastoral relation between minister and people, and all such stories are curious, not merely for their amusement, but from the illustration they afford us of that peculiar Scottish humour which we are now describing. He had himself, when a very young boy, before he came up to the Edinburgh High School, been at the parochial school where he resided, and which, like many others at that period, had a considerable reputation for the skill and scholarship of the master. He used to describe school scenes rather different, I suspect, from school scenes in our day. One boy, on coming late, explained that the cause had been a regular pitched battle between his parents, with the details of which he amused his schoolfellows, and he described the battle in vivid and

Scottish Homeric terms: 'And eh, as they faucht and they faucht,' adding, however, with much complacency, 'But my minnie dang, she did tho'.' As I have said, he was a clergyman of the Established Church, and had many stories about ministers and people arising out of his own pastoral experience, or the experience of friends and neighbours. He was much delighted with the not very refined rebuke which one of his own farmers had given to a young minister who had for some Sundays occupied his pulpit. The young man dined with the farmer in the afternoon when services were over, and his appetite was so sharp, that he thought it necessary to apologize to his host for eating so substantial a dinner: —'You see,' he said, 'I am always very hungry after preaching.' The old gentleman, not much admiring the youth's pulpit ministrations, having heard this apology two or three times, at last replied sarcastically: 'Indeed, sir, I'm no surprised at it, considering the trash that comes aff your stamach in the morning.' There was a story for which he had names of place and persons, but I forget whether it was of his own experience. I think it was his own; at any rate it was thus: A lad had come for examination, previous to his receiving his first communion. The pastor, knowing that his young friend was not very profound in his theology, and, not wishing to discourage him, or keep him from the table unless compelled to do so, began by asking what he thought a safe question, and what would give him confidence. So he took the old Testament, and asked him, in reference to the Mosaic law, how many commandments there were. After a little thought he put his answer in the modest form of a supposition, and replied, cautiously, 'Aiblins[1] a hunner.' The clergyman was vexed, and told him such ignorance was intolerable, that he could not proceed in examination, and that the youth must wait and learn more; so he went away. On returning home he met a friend on his

[1] Perhaps.

way to the manse, and, on learning that he, too, was going to the minister for examination, shrewdly asked him, 'Weel, what will ye say noo if the minister speers hoo mony commandments there are?' 'Say! why, I shall say ten to be sure.' To which the other rejoined, with great triumph, 'Ten! Try ye him wi' ten! I tried him wi' a hunner, and he wasna satisfeed.'

I have received, from Miss Stirling Graham of Duntrune, a kind contribution to the present volume. I have deemed it best to put her communications together, and I introduce them here. They contain an account of an extraordinary Scottish superstition, and of an equally extraordinary mode of acting under its influence. They describe two remarkable Scottish characters, and contain some Forfarshire traditional sayings. Those who have read a volume lately printed for circulation amongst her friends, containing an account of some of those 'Mystifications' with which she charmed the Edinburgh society of her early days, will know how exquisite is Miss Stirling Graham's appreciation of Scottish humour, and how complete her knowledge of Scottish character.

There lived here in Gayfield Square two charming old maiden ladies, Mrs Mary Smith and Miss Peggy Fyffe. They had a pet superstition, for which they paid, between them, threepence a week to a street porter, that he might be the first to tell them it was Monday, deeming it unlucky to hear the day first mentioned by a woman. They laid each three-halfpence on the hall table on Sunday night, and early next morning the man called to wish them a happy Monday, and pick up his reward. Once when Miss Fyffe was confined to bed, her attendant inquired what she would like for dinner, for it was *Monday*, and there would be no fish to be got. 'Wae worth you,' Miss Fyffe exclaimed, 'do ye no ken that I pay a man to tell me it's Monday?' When Miss Fyffe died, Mrs Smith refused to pay any more than her weekly dole of three-halfpence. Miss Douglas of Brigton being

present, the maid whispered, 'Never mind, I'll just pay it out of the house-money!' When Miss Douglas returned home, she related this strange superstition to a party of friends, who enjoyed it as a joke; but her sister, Mrs Hunter, looked rather serious, saying, 'Well, I am not the least superstitious, but I do not like to be told by a woman it is Monday!'

Mrs Graham of Balmure had a faithful old servant called Saunders Hay, who had a ready word on every subject. Hearing Miss Graham appeal to her sister, if she did not think her gown rather too long, might it not be as well to have it shortened? 'Na, na,' quoth Saunders; 'it's very weel; clip nor pare ony mare at it.' One Sunday evening Saunders and his wife had a serious quarrel. Jean said she thought David (King David) hadna taen much pains when he *metred* the Psalms; on which Saunders flew in a passion at her ignorance, and reminded her that it was George Buchanan who metred the Psalms.

Mr Taylor, well known in London as having the management of the opera-house, had his father up from Aberdeen to visit him and see the wonders of the city. When the old man returned home, his friends, anxious to know the impressions produced on his mind by scenes and characters so different from what he had been accustomed to at home, inquired what sort of business his son carried on? 'Ou,' said he (in reference to the operatic singers and the corps de ballet), 'He just keeps a curn[1] o' quainies[2] and a wheen widdyfous,[3] and gars them fissle,[4] and loup, and mak murgeons[5] to please the great fouk.' An Aberdonian of the name of Bannerman (possibly a cousin of mine own), of a matter-of-fact disposition, when some one remarked, 'It's a fine day,' dryly responded, 'Fa's findin' faut wi' the day?—ye wad pick a quarrel wi' a steen wa'.'

Another Aberdonian, describing the dress of a lady

[1] A number. [2] Young girls. [3] Gallow birds.
[4] Make whistling noises. [5] Distorted gestures.

whom he had seen at a ball the night before, said 'She had a tappie-towrie on her head, and a diamond necklace on her neck; and she had stockings and shoon, for I saw *them*, but for onything mair I dinna ken.'

Mrs Mathew, who farmed Westhall some twenty years ago, was an original homely person. Her maiden name was Anderson, the descendant of a race of sensible well-to-do people. On inquiring if she was connected with the provost of Dundee, she replied, with a look of great contempt, 'Na, na, his father cam oot o' Forgan. He was wont to ca' my father the *man Anderson*, but, my certie, he wasna fit to be linings to the man Anderson. Our land is very dear, and so greedy for muck, deil burst it; and my grieve is a souple, double, seceder rascal.' As a set off to this account, a farmer, close to Edinburgh, observed to Mr R. Chambers: 'The land oot here is noo quite tired o' police dung.'

A farmer in Strathmore being invited to dine at Belmont, had the precaution to ask the butler if there was any particular ceremony to be observed at table, and was told there was only one thing his lord and lady disliked, and that was the drinking of healths. The good man determined to be on his good behaviour; so, when raising the wine to his lips, he called out 'Here's to a' the company's gude health, except my Lord Privy Seal and Lady Betty Mackenzie.'

Mr Miller of Ballumbie had occasion to find fault with one of his labourers who had been improvident and known better days. He was digging a drain, and he told him if he did not make better work he should turn him off. The man was very angry, and throwing down his spade, called out in a tone of resentment: 'Ye are ower pridefu', Davie Miller; since I mind ye i' the warld when ye had neither cow nor ewe.' 'Very well,' replied Mr Miller mildly, 'I remember you when you had both.'

A neighbour called one day upon Lord Dunsinnan when he was spending his law-holidays on his estate in

Strathmore. The dinner consisted of broth and two boiled fowls. Just as they were sitting down to table another neighbour walked in, and another boiled fowl was placed before him; and after some excellent claret, and pleasant discourse, the visitors mounted their horses to ride home, pondering, by the way, over the singularity of the dinner, and wondering what the servants got; they had the curiosity to ask them, to which they replied, 'Ilka ane had a hen boiled in broth.'

The late Lord Airlie remarking to one of his tenants that it was a very wet season, 'Indeed, my lord,' replied the man, 'I think the spiggot's out a'thegither.'

A countryman, from the Braes of Angus, came to tell the minister that his wife was brought to bed, and they wished him to christen the bairn. The minister, very pompous, inquired whether the child was male or female? 'It's neither, sir,' was the answer. 'Then, in the name of goodness,' said the reverend man, 'what is it?' 'Ou, it's just a bit queanie!'

An old beggar woman was a frequent visitor at Duntrune. She was called Bobbins, a nickname which she did not particularly like, as it had reference to some intromissions with her neighbour's yarn. She was seized with a cold, and confined to bed. The neighbours sent donations of various delicacies, one of them a jar of black-currant jam, which she emptied into a wooden dish, and ate it all up with a large horn spoon, making wry faces all the time, and took credit to herself for the same, by remarking, 'That mony ane wadna sup it, for the leddy maks her jeil wi' the caff (chaff) amang't.' Then she drank six bottles of beer and half a bottle of whisky, and fell asleep for eight-and-forty hours, at the end of which time she awoke quite recovered!

An old cadger, the personification of contentment, used to sit sound asleep on his cart, trusting himself and his fish to the discretion of the horse. One day he arrived at Duntrune nearly frozen to death, and was carried into the kitchen to be thawed. In due time

he got something to eat, and a glass of warm toddy to drink, which so cheered his heart, that he exclaimed 'Oh! sirs, I am happy wi' ye. I am just ae eild wi' the auld king (George III.), and I daur say I'm as happy a man as he is. The leddy will be takin' a glass to hersel when she comes in frae her walk, for I am sure naebody could hae it in the hoose and no tak it.'

The two following cases furnish specimens of the old Scottish domestics: There was a waggish old man cook at Duntrune for sixty years, and during three generations of its owners. In 1795, when his master was skulking, John found it necessary to take another service, and hired himself to Mr Wedderburn of Pearsie; but he wearied to get back to Duntrune. One day the Laird of Pearsie observed him putting a spit through a peat (it may have been for the purpose of cleaning it), be that as it may, the laird inquired the reason for so doing, and John replied, 'Indeed, sir, I am just going to roast a peat, for fear I forget my trade.' At the end of two years he returned to Duntrune, where he continued to exercise his calling till near the close of life.

One day he sent up a roast goose for dinner which he or some one had despoiled of a leg before it came to table; on which his master summoned him from the kitchen to inquire who had taken the leg off the goose. John replied that all the geese here had but ae leg. In corroboration of his assertion, he pointed to a whole flock before the window, who were, happily, sitting asleep on one leg, with a sentinel on the watch. The laird clapped his hands and cried *whew*, on which they got up on both legs, and flew off. But John, no way discomfited, told his master if he had cried whew to the one on the table, it would most likely have done the same! It is not to be believed that John had ever read Boccaccio, or that he ever heard of the Venetian cook, Chichibio, who played the same trick with the crane's leg; but it is possible that two artists in the same vocation, even with four centuries rolling between

them, may have originated similar ideas—therefore we may safely give John Fraser credit for his invention. He died in Dundee, where his master paid the last tribute of respect to his memory, and laid his head in the grave beside the family he had served so faithfully.

When the funeral moved from his house, the widow, in the exuberance of gratification, called aloud to her neighbours to come and see the 'beautiful burial.'

There lived in Arbroath a very remarkable old woman named Meg Matthew, a generous, noble, and disinterested character, and her conduct to the friendless and the orphans should be recorded. She had been a servant to Mr Cruickshank, the minister of Kinnel. The minister and his wife both died during her service, and left three children totally unprovided. Upon which Meg engaged an attic room in the Market-gate of Arbroath, and carried the two boys and the little girl with her, where she span to maintain them, and she begged from those whom she thought could afford it, their schooling and clothing. She did not ask like a mendicant, but said she must have such and such things for her bairns; and when the boys were to be fitted out, she would call at various places, and tell the lady of the house that she must have linen, and that the young ladies must set to work and make so many shirts for Jamie or Willy.

Situations were procured for the boys; one went to the West Indies, the other to Montreal, where he married and had a family, whom he left in good circumstances.

In the course of years, the other returned with a competency, and died in Arbroath.

Meg herself accompanied the boys to London to witness their departure, and she saw the king (George III.), whom she described as being 'just like ony ither husbandman wi' a stand o' blue claes.'

Betsy Cruickshank obtained a lady's-maid's place in Hopetoun House, where she remained till her marriage with Mr Haldane, a stocking manufacturer in Haddington. He left her a widow in comfort, and she was much

respected, and died in a good old age. Meg was the theme of many conversations between the young ladies of Hopetoun and their attendant. Her name and fame were even well known among the servants.

One day a housemaid ran into the room calling out 'Miss Cruickshank, if your Meg be in the body, she is now coming up the road.'

It was Meg herself, arrived on foot from Arbroath; and rapturously she was welcomed by the whole family. She would remain only a short time, declining all favours for herself; and when they offered to show her through the house, she replied 'Na, na, I'm no gaen to big the marrow of it.'

She returned home to her spinning-wheel in her solitary little room, and from her homely wrinkled face and rather unsocial manner, she was looked upon by coarse-minded people in the light of a witch, or one that was in compact with the devil. Her dress was a short gown over a woollen petticoat, a striped wincey apron, and a *close white mutch* with a black hood over it. She span a coarse yarn from the waist with both hands. I remember her in her last illness, her death, and seeing her laid in her coffin; and now, looking through the long vista of the present century, and far down into the past, I venerate the singularly beautiful character of that dear old woman, and noble Scottish heart.

Her dust lies within the cemetery of the old abbey of Arbroath.

> Embalmed in memory with things that are holy,
> By the spirit that is undying.

About this time Arbroath embraced a very primitive society.

The players visited it once a year for a few weeks, and acted in the hay loft of the inn.

A very good set they were; stars sometimes from the metropolis, with grand names, such as Willoughby and Mandeville.

Old ladies would take their knitting, and one more eccentric than the others, would carry her muslin caps wet with starch, to prepare them for being ironed, or, as she said, 'to make them ready to be *goosed*;' and she clapped them between the palms of her hands when cheering the performers.

An Episcopal clergyman married the widow of a blind gentleman, who fitted herself out with such a trousseau as made people *wonder*, for she said 'I was married to a moudiewart last, but now I am getting a husband who can *see* me.'

Some people, not very scrupulous, put bad coppers into the plate at the chapel door on Sundays, with which the good lady paid her losses at cards during the week, and so, in the end, it came to be known through whose veins the *ill bawbees* circulated.

At one of her parties she remarked that she had never been able to procure any good gin since the Dutch took Flushing. 'Wifie, wifie,' interposed the minister, 'Flushing is in Holland.' 'Weel,' she replied, 'I'm sure I dinna care whether it be in France or Ireland!!!'

We find in the conversation of old people frequent mention of parochial functionaries, now either become common-place, and like the rest of the world, or removed altogether, and shut up in poor-houses or mad-houses—I mean the parish idiot, eccentric, or somewhat crazy, useless, idle creatures, who used to wander from house to house, and sometimes made very shrewd, sarcastic, and humorous remarks upon what was going on in the parish. They used to take great liberty of speech regarding the conduct and disposition of those with whom they came in contact; and many odd sayings were traditionary in the country localities, which emanated from the parish idiots. I have a strong kindly feeling towards this class of imperfectly intelligent, but often perfectly cunning beings: partly I believe from recollections of early associations in boyish days with

some of those Davy Gellatleys. I have therefore preserved all the anecdotes with which I have been favoured, where their odd sayings and indications of a degree of mental activity have been recorded. Parish idiots seem to have had a partiality for getting near the pulpit in church, and their presence there was accordingly sometimes annoying to the preacher and the congregation; as at Maybole, when Dr Paul, now of St Cuthbert's, was minister in 1823, the idiot John McLymont had been in the habit of standing so close to the pulpit door as to overlook the Bible and pulpit board. When required, however, by the clergyman, to keep at a greater distance, and not *look in upon the minister*, he got intensely angry and violent. He threatened the minister, 'Sir, bæeby (maybe) I'll come further,' meaning to intimate that perhaps he would, if much provoked, come into the pulpit altogether. This, indeed, actually took place on another occasion, and the tenure of the ministerial position was justified by an argument of a most amusing nature. The circumstance, I am assured, happened in a parish of the north. The clergyman, on coming into church, found the pulpit occupied by the parish idiot. The authorities had been unable to remove him without more violence than was seemly, and therefore waited for the minister to dispossess Tam of the place he had assumed. 'Come down, sir, immediately,' was the peremptory and indignant call; and on Tam being unmoved, it was repeated with still greater energy. Tam, however, very confidentially replied, looking down from his elevation: 'Na, na, minister! just ye come up wi' me. This is a perverse generation, and faith they need us baith.' It is curious to mark the sort of glimmering of sense, and even of discriminating thought displayed by persons of this class; as an example, take a conversation held by this same idiot, John McLymont, with Dr Paul, whom he met some time after. He seemed to have recovered his good humour, as he stopped him, and said, 'Sir, I would like to speer a question at ye on a subject

that's troubling me.' 'Well, Johnie, what is the question?' To which he replied, 'Sir, is it lawful at any time to tell a lee?' The minister desired to know what Johnie himself thought upon the point. 'Weel, sir,' said he, 'I'll no say but in every case it's wrang to tell a lee; but,' added he, looking archly at me and giving me a wink, 'I think there are *waur lees than others*.' 'How,' said I, 'Johnie?'—and then he instantly replied, with all the simplicity of a fool, 'to *keep down a din for instance*. I'll no say but a man does wrang in telling a lee to keep down a din, but I'm sure he does not do half sae muckle wrang as a man who tells a lee to kick up a deevilment o' a din.' This opened a question not likely to occur to such a mind. Mr Usher, minister of Inveraven in Morayshire, narrates a curious example of want of intelligence combined with a power of cunning to redress a fancied wrong shown by a poor natural of the parish, who had been seized with a violent inflammatory attack, and was in very great danger. The medical attendant saw it necessary to bleed him, but he resisted and would not submit to it. At last, the case became so hopeless that they were obliged to use force, and, holding his hands and feet, the doctor opened a vein and drew blood, upon which the poor creature, struggling violently, bawled out, 'O doctor, doctor! you'll kill me! you'll kill me! and depend upon it, the first thing I'll do when I get to the other world will be to *report you to the Board of Supervision there, and get you dismissed*.' A most extraordinary sensation was once produced on a congregation by Rab Hamilton, a well remembered idiot of Ayr, on the occasion of his attendance at the Auld Kirk of the 'town wham ne'er surpasses.' Miss Kirkwood, Bothwell, relates the story from the recollection of her aunt who was present. Rab had put his head between some iron rails, the first intimation of which to the congregation was a stentorian voice crying out, 'Murder! my head'll hae to be cuttit aff! Holy minister! congregation! O my head maun

be cuttit aff. It's a judgment for leaving my godlie Mr Peebles at the Newton.' After he had been extricated and quieted, when asked, why he put his head there? he said, 'It was jeest to look on[1] wi' *anither woman.*'

I have received two anecdotes illustrative both of the occasional acuteness of mind, and of the sensitiveness of feeling, occasionally indicated by persons thus situated. A well-known idiot, Jamie Fraser, belonging to the parish of Lunan, in Forfarshire, quite surprised people sometimes by his replies. The congregation of his parish church had for some time distressed the minister by their habit of sleeping in church. He had often endeavoured to impress them with a sense of the impropriety of such conduct, and one day when Jamie was sitting in the front gallery wide awake, when many were slumbering round him, the clergyman endeavoured to awaken the attention of his hearers by stating the fact, saying 'You see even Jamie Fraser, the idiot, does not fall asleep as so many of you are doing.' Jamie not liking, perhaps, to be thus designated, coolly replied, 'An' I hadna been an idiot, I wad ha' been sleeping too.' Another of these imbeciles, belonging to Peebles, had been sitting at church for sometime listening attentively to a strong representation from the pulpit of the guilt of deceit and falsehood in Christian characters. He was observed to turn red, and grow very uneasy, until at last, as if wincing under the supposed attack upon himself personally, he roared out, 'Indeed, minister, there's mair leears in Peebles than me.' As examples of idiots possessing much of the dry humour of their more sane countrymen, and of their facility to utter sly and ready-witted sayings, I have received the two following from Mr W. Chambers: Daft Jock Gray, the supposed original of Davie Gellatley, was one day assailed by the minister of a south-country parish on the subject of his idleness. 'John,' said the minister rather pompously, 'you are a very idle fellow; you

[1] Read from the same book.

might surely herd a few cows.' 'Me hird!' replied Jock, 'I dinna ken cows frae geese.'

In Peebles there was a crazy being of this kind called 'Daft Yedie.' On one occasion he saw a gentleman, a stranger in the town, who had a club foot. Yedie contemplated this phenomenon with some interest, and addressing the gentleman, said compassionately: 'It's a great pity—it spoils the boot.' There is a story of one of those half-witted creatures of a different character from the humorous ones already recorded, and which I have often thought of as exceedingly affecting, and with which I will conclude my collection. The story is traditionary in a country district, and I am not aware of its being ever printed. A poor boy, of this class, who had evidently manifested a tendency towards religious and devotional feelings, asked permission from the clergyman to attend the Lord's Table and partake of the holy communion with the other members of the congregation (whether Episcopalian or Presbyterian I do not know). The clergyman demurred for some time, under the impression of his mind being incapable of a right and due understanding of the sacred ordinance. But observing the extreme earnestness of the poor boy, at last gave consent, and he was allowed to come. He was much affected, and all the way home was heard to exclaim 'Oh! I hae seen the pretty man.' This referred to his seeing the Lord Jesus, whom he had approached in the sacrament. He kept repeating the words, and went with them on his lips to rest for the night. Not appearing at his usual hour for breakfast, when they went to his bed-side they found him dead! The excitement had been too much—mind and body had given way—and the half-idiot of earth awoke to the glories and the bliss of his Redeemer's presence.

The relative whom I have mentioned had many stories of a parochial fraternity of a more authorized character than the parish idiots, but whose eccentricities also have, in a great measure, given way before the assimi-

lating spirit of the times. I mean the old Scottish beadle, or betheral, as he used to be called. Some classes of men are found to have that nameless but distinguishing characteristic of figure and aspect which marks out particular occupations and professions of mankind. This was so much the case in the betheral class, that an old lady observing a well-known judge and advocate walking together in the street, remarked to a friend as they passed by: 'Dear me, Lucy, wha are they twa *beddle-looking* bodies?' They were often great originals, and, I suspect, must have been somewhat given to convivial habits, from a remark I recollect of the late Baron Clerk Rattray, viz. that in his younger days he had hardly ever known a perfectly sober betheral. However this may have been, they were, as a class, remarkable for quaint humour, and for being shrewd observers of what was going on. I have heard of an occasion where the betheral made his wits to furnish an apology for his want of sobriety. He had been sent round the parish by the minister to deliver notices at all the houses of the catechising which was to precede the preparation for receiving the communion. On his return it was quite evident that he had partaken too largely of refreshment since he had been on his expedition. The minister reproached him for this improper conduct. The betheral pleaded the pressing *hospitality* of the parishioners. The clergyman did not admit the plea, and added, 'Now, John, I go through the parish, and you don't see me return fou as you have done.' 'Ay, minister,' rejoined the betheral, with much complacency, 'but then aiblins ye're no sae popular i' the parish as me.' My relative used to tell of one of these officials receiving, with much ceremony, a brother betheral from a neighbouring parish, who had come with the minister thereof about to preach for some special occasion. After service, the betheral of the stranger clergyman felt proud of the performance of the appointed duty, and said, in a triumphant tone, to his friend, 'I think our minister did weel; ay, he gars

the stour flee oot o' the cushion.' To which the other rejoined, with a calm feeling of superiority, 'Stour oot o' the cushion! hout, our minister, sin he cam wi' us, has dung the guts oot o' twa bibles.' Another description I have heard of an energetic preacher more forcible than delicate: 'Eh, our minister had a great power o' watter, for he grat and spat, and swat like mischeef.' An obliging anonymous correspondent has sent me a story of a functionary of this class whose pride was centred not so much in the performance of the minister as of the precentor. He states that he remembers an old beadle of the church which was called 'Haddo's Hole' (and sometimes 'The Little Kirk'), in Edinburgh, whose son occasionally officiated as precentor. The son was not very well qualified for the duty, but the father had a high opinion of the son's vocal powers. In those days there was always service in the church on the Tuesday evenings; and when the father was asked on such occasions 'Who's to preach to-night?' his reply used to be, 'I divna ken wha's till preach, but my son's for till precent.' This class of functionaries were very free in their remarks upon the preaching of strangers, who used occasionally to occupy the pulpit of their church—the city betherals speaking sometimes in a most condescending manner of clergy from the provincial parishes. As, for example, a betheral of one of the large churches in Glasgow, criticizing the sermon of a minister from the country who had been preaching in the city church, characterized it as 'Gude coorse country wark.' A betheral of one of the churches of St Giles', Edinburgh, used to call on the family of Mr Robert Stevenson, engineer, who was one of the elders. On one occasion they asked him, what had been the text on such a night, when none of the family had been present. The man of office, confused at the question, and unwilling to show anything like ignorance, poured forth 'Weel, ye see, the text last day, was just entirely, sirs—yes—the text, sirs—what was it again—ou aye,

just entirely, ye see it was "What profiteth a man if he lose the world, and gain his own soul?"' Most of such stories are usually of an old standing. A more recent one has been told me of a betheral in a royal burgh much decayed from former importance, and governed by a feeble municipality of old men who continued in office, and in fact constituted rather the shadow than the substance of a corporation. A clergyman from a distance having come to officiate in the parish church, the betheral, knowing the terms on which it was usual for the minister officiating to pray for the efficiency of the local magistracy, quietly cautioned the clergyman before service that, in regard to the town-council there, it would be quite out of place for him to pray that they should be a 'terror to evil doers,' because, as he said, the 'poor auld bodies could be nae terror to onybody.' I had an anecdote from a friend of a reply from a betheral to the minister *in* church, which was quaint and amusing from the shrewd self-importance it indicated in his own acuteness. The clergyman had been annoyed during the course of his sermon by the restlessness and occasional whining of a dog, which at last began to bark outright. He looked out for the beadle, and directed him very peremptorily, 'John, carry that dog out.' John looked up to the pulpit, and with a very knowing expression said, 'Na, na, sir; I'se just mak him gae out on his ain four legs.' I have another story of canine misbehaviour in church. A dog was present during the service, and in the sermon the worthy minister was in the habit of speaking very loud, and, in fact, when he got warmed with his subject, of shouting almost to the top of his voice. The dog who, in the early part, had been very quiet, became quite excited, as is not uncommon with some dogs when hearing a noise, and from whingeing and whining, as the speaker's voice rose loud and strong, at last began to bark and howl. The minister, naturally much annoyed at the interruption, called upon the betheral to put out the dog, who at once ex-

pressed his readiness to obey the order, but could not resist the temptation to look up to the pulpit, and to say very significantly, 'Ay, ay, sir; but indeed it was yersel began it.' There is a dog story connected with Reminiscences of Glasgow (see *Chambers' Journal*, March 1855), which is full of meaning. The bowls of rum punch which so remarkably characterized the Glasgow dinners of last century and the early part of the present, it is to be feared made some of the congregation given to somnolency on the Sundays following. The members of the town council often adopted Saturday for such meetings; accordingly, the Rev. Mr Thom, an excellent clergyman, took occasion to mark this propensity with some acerbity. A dog had been very troublesome, and disturbed the congregation for some time, when the minister at last gave orders to the beadle: 'Take out that dog; he'd wauken a Glasgow magistrate.'

It would be impossible in these reminiscences to omit the well-known and often-repeated anecdote connected with an eminent divine of our own country, whose works take a high place in our theological literature. The story to which I allude was rendered popular throughout the kingdom some years ago, by the inimitable mode in which it was told or rather acted by the late Charles Mathews. But Mathews was wrong in the person of whom he related the humorous address. I have assurance of the parties from a friend, whose father, a distinguished clergyman in the Scottish church at the time, had accurate knowledge of the whole circumstances. The late celebrated Dr Macknight, a learned and profound scholar and commentator, was nevertheless, as a preacher, to a great degree, heavy, unrelieved by fancy or imagination; an able writer, but a dull speaker. His colleague Dr Henry, well known as the author of a *History of England*, was, on the other hand, a man of great humour, and could not resist a joke when the temptation came upon him. On one occasion when coming to church, Dr Macknight had been caught

in a shower of rain, and entered the vestry soaked with wet. Every means were used to relieve him from his discomfort; but as the time drew on for divine service he became much distressed, and ejaculated over and over, 'Oh, I wush that I was dry; do you think I'm dry; do you think I'm dry eneuch noo?' His jocose colleague could resist no longer, but, patting him on the shoulder, comforted him with the sly assurance, 'Bide a wee, Doctor, and ye'se be dry eneuch when ye get into the pu'pit.' Another quaint remark of the facetious Doctor to his more formal colleague has been preserved by friends of the family. Dr Henry, who, with all his pleasantry and abilities, had himself as little popularity in the pulpit as his coadjutor, had been remarking to Dr Macknight what a blessing it was that they two were colleagues in one charge, and continued dwelling on the subject so long, that Dr M., not quite pleased at the frequent reiteration of the remark, said that it certainly was a great pleasure to himself, but he did not see what great benefit it might be to the world. 'Ah,' said Dr Henry, 'an it hadna been for that, there wad hae been *twa* toom[1] kirks this day.' I am indebted to a gentleman, himself also a distinguished member of the Scottish church, for an authentic anecdote of this learned divine, and which occurred whilst Dr Macknight was the minister of Maybole. One of his parishioners, a well-known humorous blacksmith of the parish, who, no doubt, thought that the Doctor's learned books were rather a waste of time and labour for a country pastor, was asked if his minister was at home. The Doctor was then busy bringing out his laborious and valuable work, his *Harmony of the Four Gospels*. 'Na, he's gane to Edinburgh on a verra useless job.' On being asked what this useless work might be which engaged his pastor's time and attention, he answered, 'He's gane to mak four men agree wha ne'er cast out.' The good-humoured and candid answer of a learned and rather long-winded

[1] Empty.

preacher of the old school, always appeared to me quite charming. The good man was far from being a popular preacher, and yet he could not reduce his discourses below the hour and a half. On being asked, as a gentle hint, of their possibly needless length, if he did not feel *tired* after preaching so long, he replied, 'Na, na, I'm no tired;' adding, however, with much naïveté, 'But, Lord, hoo tired the fouk whiles are.'

The late good, kind-hearted Dr David Dickson was fond of telling a story of a Scottish termagant of the days before kirk session discipline had passed away. A couple were brought before the court, and Janet, the wife, was charged with violent and undutiful conduct, and with wounding her husband, by throwing a three-legged stool at his head. The minister rebuked her conduct, and pointed out its grievous character, by explaining that just as Christ was head of his church, so the husband was head of the wife; and therefore, in assaulting *him*, she had, in fact, injured her own body. 'Weel,' she replied, 'it's come to a fine pass gin a wife canna kame her ain head.' 'Aye, but Jane,' rejoined the minister, 'a three-legged stool is a thief-like bane kame to scart yer ain head wi'!'

Our object in bringing up and recording anecdotes of this kind is to elucidate the sort of humour we refer to, and to show it as a humour of *past* times. A modern clergyman could hardly adopt the tone and manner of the older class of ministers—men not less useful and beloved, on account of their odd Scottish humour, which indeed suited their time. Could a clergyman, for instance, now come off from the trying position in which we have heard of a northern minister being placed, and by the same way through which he extricated himself with much good nature, and quiet sarcasm? A young man sitting opposite to him in the front of the gallery had been up late on the previous night, and had stuffed the cards with which he had been occupied into his coat pocket. Forgetting the circumstance, he pulled out his

handkerchief, and the cards all flew about. The minister simply looked at him, and remarked, 'Eh man, your psalm buik has been ill bund.' Many anecdotes of pithy and facetious replies are recorded of a minister of the west, usually distinguished as 'Our Watty Dunlop.' On one occasion two irreverent younger fellows determined, as they said, to 'taigle'[1] the minister. Coming up to him in the High Street of Dumfries, they accosted him with much solemnity: 'Maister Dunlop, dae ye hear the news?' 'What news?' 'Oh, the deil's dead.' 'Is he?' said Mr Dunlop; 'then I maun pray for twa faitherless bairns.' Dr Gilchrist, formerly of the East Parish of Greenock, and who died minister of the Canongate, Edinburgh, received an intimation of one of his hearers, who had been exceedingly irregular in his attendance, that he had taken seats in an Episcopal chapel. One day soon after, he met his former parishioner, who told him that he had 'changed his religion.' 'Indeed,' said the Doctor quietly, 'how's that? I ne'er heard ye had any.' An admirable story of a quiet pulpit rebuke is traditionary in the 'east nuik of Fife,' and told of a seceding minister, Mr Shirra, a man well remembered by some of the older generation for many excellent and some eccentric qualities. An officer of a volunteer corps on duty in the place, and very proud of his fresh uniform, had come to Mr Shirra's church, and walked about as if looking for a seat, but in fact to show off his dress, which he saw was attracting attention from some of the less grave members of the congregation. He came to his place, however, rather quickly, on Mr Shirra quietly remonstrating, 'O man, will ye sit down, and we'll see your new breeks when the kirk's dune.' This same Mr Shirra was well known from his quaint, and, as it were, parenthetical comments which he introduced in his reading of Scripture, as, for example, on reading from the 116*th Psalm*, 'I said in my haste all men are liars,' he quietly observed, 'Indeed, Dauvid, an ye

[1] Confound.

had been i' this parish ye might hae said it at your leesure.'

The following anecdotes, collected from different contributors, are fair samples of the quaint and original character of Scottish ways and expressions now becoming more and more matters of reminiscence: A poor man came to his minister for the purpose of intimating his intention of being married. As he expressed, however, some doubts on the subject, and seemed to hesitate, the minister asked him if there were any doubts about his being accepted. No, that was not the difficulty; but he expressed a fear that it might not be altogether suitable, and he asked whether, if he were once married, he could not (in case of unsuitability and unhappiness) get *un*married. The clergyman assured him that was impossible; if he married it must be for better and worse; that he could not go back upon the step. So thus instructed he went away. After a time he returned, and said he had made up his mind to try the experiment, and he came and was married. Ere long he came back very disconsolate, and declared it would not do at all; that he was quite miserable, and begged to be unmarried. The minister assured him it was impossible, and urged him to put away the notion of anything so absurd, which, indeed, must be a suggestion of the Evil One, and that if he would resist the devil he would flee from him. 'Na, na,' said the poor man, 'that's no true wi' this deevil, for whan I resist her, instead o' fleeing from me, she just flees at me.'

A faithful minister of the gospel being one day engaged in visiting some members of his flock, came to the door of a house where his gentle tapping could not be heard for the noise of contention within. After waiting a little he opened the door, and walked in, saying, with an authoritative voice, 'I should like to know who is the head of this house.' 'Weel, sir,' said the husband and father, 'if ye sit doon a wee, we'll maybe be able to tell ye, for we're just tryin' to settle that point.'

A minister in the north returning thanks in his prayers one Sabbath for the excellent harvest, began, as usual, 'O Lord, we thank thee,' etc., and went on to mention its abundance, and its safe ingathering; but, feeling anxious to be quite candid and scrupulously truthful, added, 'all except a few fields between this and Stonehaven not worth mentioning.' A Scotch preacher being sent to officiate one Sunday at a country parish, was accommodated at night in the manse, in a very diminutive closet, instead of the usual best bedroom appropriated to strangers.

'Is this the bedroom?' he said, starting back in amazement.

'Deed ay, sir, this is the prophets' chammer.'

'It maun be for the *minor* prophets, then,' was the quiet reply.

Elders, no doubt, frequently partook of the original and humorous character of ministers and others, their contemporaries; and amusing scenes must have passed, and good Scotch sayings been said, where they were concerned. Dr Chalmers used to repeat one of these sayings of an elder with great delight. The circumstance took place in Lady Glenorchy's church, and Lady Glenorchy herself was one of the parties concerned. It seems her ladyship had, for some reason, taken offence at the proceedings of the kirk session, and a result of which was that she ceased putting in her usual liberal offering in the plate at the door. This had gone on for some time, till one of the elders, of a less forbearing character than the others, took his turn at the plate. Lady Glenorchy, as usual, passed by without a contribution, but made a formal curtsey to the elder as she passed, and sailed majestically up the aisle. The good man was determined not to let her pass so easily. He quickly followed her up the passage, and urged the remonstrance, 'My lady, gie us less o' yer mainers, and mair o' your siller.'[1]

[1] The history of this noble lady since her death forms a striking

Of an eccentric and eloquent professor and divine of a northern Scottish university, there are numerous and extraordinary traditionary anecdotes. I have received an account of some of these anecdotes from the kind communication of an eminent Scottish clergyman, who was himself, in early days, his frequent hearer. The stories told of the strange observations and allusions which he introduced into his pulpit discourses, almost surpass belief. For many reasons, they are not suitable to the nature of this publication, still less could they be tolerated in any pulpit administration now, although familiar to his contemporaries. The remarkable circumstance, however, connected with these eccentricities was, that he introduced them with the utmost gravity, and oftentimes after he had delivered them, pursued his subject with great earnestness and eloquence, as if he had said nothing uncommon. One saying of the Professor, however, *out* of the pulpit, is too good to be omitted, and may be recorded without violation of propriety. He happened to meet at the house of a lawyer, whom he considered rather a man of *sharp* practice, and for whom he had no great favour, two of his own parishioners. The lawyer jocularly and ungraciously put the question: 'Doctor, these are members of your flock; may I ask, do you look upon them as white sheep or as black sheep?' 'I don't

illustration of the uncertainty of all earthly concerns. Wilhelmina Viscountess Glenorchy, during her lifetime, built and endowed a church for two ministers, who were provided with very handsome incomes. She died July 17, 1786, and was buried on July 24, aged 44. Her interment took place, by her own direction, in the church she had founded, immediately in front of the pulpit; and she fixed upon that spot as a place of security and safety, where her mortal remains might rest in peace till the morning of the resurrection. But alas for the uncertainty of all earthly plans and projects for the future!—the iron road came on its reckless course, and swept the church away. The site was required for the North British Railway, which passed directly over the spot where Lady Glenorchy had been buried. Her remains were accordingly disinterred December 24, 1844; and the trustees of the church, not having yet erected a new one, deposited the body of their foundress in the vaults beneath St John's Episcopal Church, and there they have rested for fifteen years.

know,' answered the Professor drily, 'whether they are black or white sheep, but I know that if they are long here they are pretty sure to be *fleeced*.'

The clever impromptu of a judge's *lady*, in reply to one by the witty Henry Erskine, is also well worthy of being recorded. At a dinner party at Lord Armadale's, when a bottle of claret was rung for, a bottle of port was brought in by mistake. A second time claret was sent for, and a second time the same mistake occurred. Henry Erskine addressed the host in an impromptu, which was meant as a parody on the well-known Scottish song, 'My jo, Janet':

Kind sir, it's for your courtesie
When I come here to dine, sir,
For the love ye bear to me,
Gie me the claret wine, sir.

To which Mrs. Honeyman retorted:

Drink the port, the claret's dear,
Erskine, Erskine;
Ye'll get drunk on't, never fear,
My jo, Erskine.

There is a curious traditionary story current in some families regarding a celebrated Scottish nobleman, which, I am assured, is true, and farther, that it has never yet appeared in print. The story is, therefore, a Scottish reminiscence, and, as such, deserves a place here. The Earl of Lauderdale was so ill as to cause great alarm to his friends, and perplexity to his physicians. One distressing symptom was a total absence of sleep, and the medical men declared their opinion, that without sleep being induced, he could not recover. His son, a queer eccentric-looking boy, who was considered not entirely right in his mind, but somewhat '*daft*,' and who, accordingly, had had little attention paid to his education, was sitting under the table, and cried out, 'Sen' for that preaching man frae Livingstone, for he

aye sleeps in the kirk.' One of the doctors thought this hint worth attending to. The experiment of 'getting a minister till him' succeeded, and sleep coming on, he recovered. The Earl, out of gratitude for this benefit, took more notice of his son, paid attention to his education, and that boy became the Duke of Lauderdale, afterwards so famous or infamous in his country's history.

Now, when we linger over these old stories, we seem to live at another period, and in such reminiscences we converse with a generation different from our own. Changes are still going on around us. They have been going on for some time past. The changes are less striking as society advances, and our later years have less and less alterations to remark. Probably each generation will have fewer changes to record than the generation that preceded; still every one who has tolerably advanced in life must feel that, comparing its beginning and its close, he has witnessed two epochs, and that he looks on a different world from one which he can remember. To elucidate this fact has been my present object, and in attempting this task I cannot but feel how trifling and unsatisfactory my remarks must seem to many who have a more enlarged and minute acquaintance with Scottish life and manners than I have. But I shall be encouraged to hope for a favourable, or at least an indulgent sentence upon these Reminiscences, if to any of my readers I shall have opened a fresh insight into the subject of social changes amongst us. Many causes operate in making change upon the habits and customs of mankind, and of late years such causes have been greatly multiplied in number and activity. In many persons, and in some who have not altogether lost their national partialities, there is a strong tendency to merge Scottish usages and Scottish expressions into the English forms, as being more correct and genteel. The facilities for moving, not merely from place to place in our own country, but from one country to another, the spread of knowledge and information

by means of periodical publications and newspapers, and the incredibly low prices at which literary works are produced, must have great effects. Then there is the improved taste in art, which, together with literature, has been taken up by young men who, fifty, sixty, seventy years ago, or more, would have known no such sources of interest, or, indeed, who would have looked upon them as unmanly and effeminate. When first these pursuits were taken up by our Scottish young men, they excited in the north much amazement, and, I fear, contempt, as was evinced by a laird of the old school, who, the first time he saw a young man at the pianoforte, asked, with evident disgust, 'Can the creature sew ony?' evidently putting the accomplishment of playing the pianoforte and the accomplishment of the needle in the same category. The greater facility of producing those articles of dress and furniture which tend to the comfort and embellishment of domestic life must have considerable influence. I have often thought how much effect on a people's habits might be traced to the single circumstance of the cheap production of pianofortes. The great and rapid advance in the higher department of music, both as to the cheap rate of hearing the compositions of the great masters and of possessing their works, must have influence upon the tastes and habits of a people. In the *Times* there appeared an advertisement of an edition of Handel's immortal work the Messiah coming out at twopence a number! Why, fifty years ago the very name of the work was known only to a few who were skilled to appreciate its high beauties. In connection, however, with this subject, I may notice here that a taste for that most interesting style of music, the pure Scottish, is in some quarters becoming a matter of reminiscence. Of reminiscence I mean so far as concerns the enthusiasm with which it was once esteemed and cultivated amongst us. I do not speak so much of the *songs* of Scotland, which can never lose their charm, although of them even some are

growing fast out of the acquaintance of the younger members of society; but I refer more particularly to the reels and strathspeys which with many Scotch persons have become nearly quite obsolete. When properly performed, it is a most animating and delightful strain—not of a refined or scientific class, but joyous and inspiriting. It has a peculiar character of its own, and requires to be performed with a particular and *spicy* dexterity of hand, whether for the bow or the keys. Accordingly, young ladies used to take lessons in it as a finish to their musical education. Such teaching would now, I fear, be treated with contempt by many of our modern fair ones. I recollect, at the beginning of the present century, my eldest sister, who was a good musician of the school of Pleyel, Kozeluch, Clementi, etc., having such lessons from Nathaniel Gow, a celebrated reel and strathspey performer. Nathaniel was the son of Neil Gow, who was the most eminent performer and composer of the pure Scottish dancing music. At the close of the last century Neil's celebrity might be said to rival that of Burns; and Neil's strathspeys were on a par with the songs of Robby. But alas! that celebrity and popularity are becoming matters of reminiscence with the few. In the rising generation the name has passed away. It is a pity. Even still, let a good strathspey performer begin to play, and every countenance brightens with animation. The fact I have alluded to, viz. the cheapness of great musical and literary works, speaks volumes for the changes that are going on, and in relation to such changes in national taste, it is both cause and effect. Taste encourages the production, and the increased production fosters the taste.

In consequence of these combined causes, families do not vegetate for years in one retired spot as they used to do; young men are encouraged to attain accomplishments and to have other sources of interest than the field or the bottle. Every one knows, or may know, everything that is going on through the whole world.

There is a tendency in mankind to lose all that is peculiar, and in nations to part with all that distinguishes them from each other. We hear of wonderful changes in habits and customs where change seemed impossible. In India and Turkey even, peculiarities and prejudices are fading away under the influence of time. It seems to me as if all men were gradually (slowly, it may be, but gradually) approximating to a common type or form of manners and ways; oddities are sunk, prominences are rounded off, sharp features are polished, and all is becoming smooth and conventional. The remark, like the effect, is general, and extends to other countries as well as to our own. But as we have more recently had our peculiarities of dialect, oddity, and eccentricity, it becomes the more amusing to mark *our* participation in this change, because a period of fifty years shews here a greater contrast than the same period would shew in most other localities.

In our reminiscences of many *changes*, which have taken place during fifty years in Scottish manners, it might form an interesting section to record some of the peculiarities which remain. I mean such peculiarities as yet linger amongst us, and still mark a difference in some of our social habits from those of England. Some Scottish usages die hard, and are found here and there for the amusement of southern visitors. To give a few examples, persons still persist among us in calling the head of the family, or the host, the *landlord*, although he never charged his guests a halfpenny for the hospitality he exercises. In games, golf and curling still continue to mark the national character—cricket was long an exotic amongst us. In many of our educational institutions, however, it seems now fairly to have taken root. We continue to call our reception-rooms '*public* rooms,' although never used for any but domestic purposes. Military rank attached to ladies is a peculiarity, as we speak of Mrs Captain Scott, Mrs Major Smith. On the occasion of a death, we persist in sending circular

notices to all the relatives, whether they know of it or not—a custom which, together with men wearing weepers at funeral solemnities, is unknown in England. Announcing a married lady's death under her maiden name must seem strange to English ears—as, for example, we read of the demise of Jane Dixon, spouse of Thomas Morison. Scottish cookery retains its ground, and hotch-potch, minced collops, sheep's heads singed, and occasionally haggis, are still marked peculiarities of the Scottish table. These social differences linger amongst us. But stronger points are worn away, eccentricities and oddities such as existed once will not do now. One does not see why eccentricity should be more developed in one age than in another, but we cannot avoid the conclusion that the day for real oddities is no more. Professors of colleges are those in whom one least expects it—grave and learned characters, and yet such *have* been in former times. We can scarcely now imagine such Professors as we read of in a past generation. Take the case of no less distinguished a person than Adam Smith, author of *The Wealth of Nations*, who went about the streets talking and laughing to himself in such a manner as to make the market women think he was deranged; and he told of one himself who ejaculated as he passed, 'Hech, sirs, and he is weel pat on, too!' expressing surprise that a decided lunatic, who from his dress appeared to be a gentleman, should be permitted to walk abroad. Professors still have their crotchets like other people; but we can scarcely conceive a professor of our day coming out like Adam Smith to have fishwives making such observations on his demeanour. Of these changes there are many which the dignified muse of history will scarcely condescend to record or notice. Perhaps some changes are better described in idle gossip like this than by the historic page; and this made me remark, as an introduction to the record of these anecdotes, that personal recollections and reminiscences might be extremely valuable in describing

those lighter variations of society which do not come properly within the scope of history. Every one at all advanced in life could convey some vivid impressions of his early days, and thus form for the younger generation a link between themselves and a past age. As an example of such communication, I would adduce the early portion of Lord Cockburn's book, and the curious account he gives of the ludicrous and absurd system of toasts and sentiments which sixty years ago was a necessary evil of the table. Some of these domestic customs which tyrannically, and one would think most uncomfortably, ruled society, and to which the fathers and grandfathers of many of us used to bear witness, seem now almost too strange to be believed; as for example, at a ball, the partners were never changed the whole evening. To a young lady, therefore, the first request for her hand in the dance was a very serious matter. An octogenarian friend of mine, in good health and spirits (long may he enjoy them!), has told me of his dress at the dancing-school balls, and which mark a considerable change of costume in a lifetime. A pearl grey coat, nearly white; white waistcoat; yellow or canary shorts, with large bunches of ribbon at the knee of the same colour, blue silk stockings; pumps, with large bows of ribbon. Cocked hats then prevailed even amongst juvenile attendants. Then, again, imagine the dire necessity of drinking the health of every mortal at table every time you received a glass of wine or called for beer, and still worse, the irksome hospitality of being pressed to eat, urged to take a fresh supply of victuals when you had already eaten more than nature required, in deference to the misplaced kindness of the host or hostess, nay, perhaps, of having an additional wing of a chicken smuggled on your plate when you were for a moment looking another way. I have heard old people remark that they can remember the custom of the host saluting all lady-guests on their arrival under his roof. I regret that we have not more reminiscences prepared

for the purpose of elucidating such changes in social customs and domestic usages as these. Much might be done by one person who would give himself to the work; for it is curious to think how far back an attentive observer and chronicler who has passed middle age, might retrace old forgotten ways, and bring traditional knowledge to the light. Take my own case for example. At eight years of age I was consigned to the care of my grand-uncle, who died, at the age of ninety-one, in 1806. He was born in 1715, so that I could have derived impressions from him of events one hundred and twenty-five years ago or upwards from the present time. Then take *his* traditionary and personal communication, and he could tell of a man and of what a man told him who had himself witnessed the execution of Charles I. This at first sight seems somewhat startling, but it will be quite evident on a moment's reflection. My uncle, at the age of fifteen, being then a younger son, was placed in a mercantile house in London; that being in the year 1730, and one of the partners being an aged man, eighty-nine years of age, would easily allow him to have been eight years old when his father took him to witness that fearful scene at Whitehall in 1649. He could have told my uncle, therefore, from personal recollection, minutiæ of details which would easily escape the pen of the historian. I would not be misunderstood as if at all implying that I had actually such an opportunity of learning traditionary Scottish customs or anecdotes from this venerable relative, because, in fact, I learnt nothing. But I mean to show how much of such information *might* have been gained and handed down if parties had been observant and communicative. A great deal of such knowledge has been conveyed by Sir Walter Scott through his novels. Still we desiderate more conversational traditions of personal recollection of past times.

CONCLUSION

In all these details regarding the changes which many now living have noticed to have taken place in our customs and habits of society in Scotland, this question must always occur to the thoughtful and serious mind, Are the changes which have been observed for *good*? Is the world a better world than that which we can remember? On some important points changes have been noticed in the upper classes of Scottish society, which unquestionably are improvements. For example, the greater attention paid to attendance upon public worship—the disappearance of profane swearing and of excess in drinking. But then the painful questions arise, Are such beneficial changes *general* through the whole body of our countrymen? may not the vices and follies of one grade of society have found a refuge in those that are of a lower class? may not new faults have taken their place where older faults have been abandoned? Of this we are quite sure, no lover of his country can fail to entertain the anxious wish, that the change we noticed in regard to drinking and swearing were universal, and that we had some evidence of its being extended through *all* classes of society. We ought certainly to feel grateful when we reflect that in many instances which we have noticed, the ways and customs of society are much improved in common sense, in decency, in delicacy, and refinement. There are certain modes of life, certain expressions, eccentricity of conduct, coarseness of speech, books and plays, which were in vogue amongst us, even fifty or sixty years ago, which would not be tolerated in society at the present time. We cannot illustrate this in a more satisfactory manner than by reference to the acknowledgment of a very interesting and charming

old lady, who died so lately as 1823. In 1821, Mrs Keith of Ravelstone, grand-aunt of Sir Walter Scott, thus writes in returning to him the work of a female novelist, which she had borrowed from him out of curiosity, and to remind her of 'auld lang syne': 'Is it not a very odd thing that I, an old woman of eighty and upwards, sitting alone, feel myself ashamed to read a book which, sixty years ago, I have heard read aloud for the amusement of large circles, consisting of the first and most creditable society in London?' There can be no doubt that, at the time referred to by Mrs Keith, *Tristram Shandy*,[1] *Tom Jones*, *Humphrey Clinker*, etc., were on the drawing-room tables of ladies whose grandchildren or great-grandchildren never saw them, or would not acknowledge it if they had seen them. But authors not inferior to Sterne, Fielding, or Smollett, are now popular, and who can describe the scenes of human life with as much force and humour, and yet there is nothing in their pages which need offend the taste of the most refined, or shock the feelings of the most pure. This is a change where there is also great improvement. It indicates not merely a better moral perception in authors themselves, but it is itself a homage to the improved spirit of the age. We will hope that, with an improved exterior, there is improvement in society within. If the feelings shrink from what is coarse in expression, we may hope that vice has, in some sort, lost attraction. At any rate, from what we discern around us, we hope favourably for the general improvement of mankind, and of our own beloved country in particular. If Scotland, in parting with her rich and racy dialect, her odd and eccentric characters, is to lose something in quaint

[1] Sterne, in one of his letters, describes his reading *Tristram Shandy* to his wife and daughter, his daughter copying from his dictation, and Mrs. Sterne sitting by and listening whilst she worked. In the life of Sterne it is recorded that he used to carry about in his pocket a volume of the same work, and read it aloud when he went into company. Admirable reading for the church dignitary, the prebendary of York! How well adapted to the hours of social intercourse with friends! How fitted for domestic seclusion with his family!

humour and good stories, we will hope she may grow and strengthen in *better* things—good as those are which she loses. However this may be, I feel quite assured that the examples which I have now given of Scottish expressions, Scottish modes and habits of life, and Scottish anecdotes which belong in a great measure to the past, and yet which are remembered as having a place in the present century, must carry conviction that great changes have taken place in the Scottish social circle. There were some things belonging to our country which we must all have desired should be changed. There were others which we could only see changed with regret and sorrow. The hardy and simple habits of Scotsmen of many past generations—their industry, economy, and integrity, which made them take so high a place in the estimation and the confidence of the people amongst whom they dwelt in all countries of the world. The intelligence and superior education of her mechanics and her peasantry, combined with a strict moral and religious demeanour, fully justified the praise of Burns when he described the humble, though sublime piety of the *Cottar's Saturday Night*, and we can well appreciate the testimony which he bore to the hallowed power and sacred influences of the devotional exercises of his boyhood's home, when he penned the immortal words :

> From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
> That makes her loved at home, revered abroad.

These things we hope and trust, under the Divine blessing, will never change, except to increase, and will never become a question of reminiscences for the past. If Scotland has lost much of the quaint and original character of former lawyers, lairds, and old ladies, much of the pungent wit and dry humour of sayings in her native dialect, she can afford to sustain the loss if she gain in refinement, and lose not the more solid qualities and more valuable characteristics by which she has been distinguished. If peculiarities of former days are partially

becoming obsolete, let them at least be preserved. Let our younger contemporaries, let those who are to come, know something of them from history, as we elders have known something of them from experience. The humour and the point cannot all be lost in their being recorded, although they may lose much. I still hope to see this carried on farther by others, as I am convinced great additions could be made to these reminiscences, which I have endeavoured to preserve. Changes of this nature in the habits and language of a nation are extremely interesting, and it is most desirable that they should be recorded as well as those greater changes and revolutions which it is the more immediate object of history to enrol amongst her annals. And, whether the changes of which we are now treating mark the deterioration or improvement of manners, useful lessons and important moral conclusions may be drawn from the narrative in both cases. Causes are at work which must yet produce still greater changes, and it is impossible to foresee what will be the future picture of Scottish life, as it will probably be now becoming every year less and less distinguished from the rest of the world. If we shall have little to mark our national peculiarities in the time to come, we cannot be deprived of our reminiscences of the *past*. As a Scotchman I am proud of the prestige which belong to us *as* a nation. I am interested in everything which is Scottish. I consider it an honour to have been born a Scotchman; and one fair excuse I have to offer for entertaining a proud feeling on the subject, one proof I can adduce, that a Scottish lineage is considered a legitimate source of self-congratulation, and that is the fact that I never in my life knew an English or Irish family with Scottish relations, where the members did not refer with much complacency to such national connection. I cherish fondly all Scottish associations. I am grieved to see our nationality fading away. I confess to a strong feeling of regret and indignation when I see the indifference shewn by the govern-

ment (whatever party be in power) towards the few memorials of that nationality that remain. Witness the condition of Edinburgh Castle, Holyrood Chapel and Palace, etc., etc., and the neglect shewn regarding their preservation and restoration. But I have done. I seem to linger over these *Reminiscences*, which now belong to a past national and social history, with mingled feelings of regret and pleasure. I have indeed, in collecting these materials, recalled many scenes which partake of that mixed character which belongs to all the concerns of human life. I believe that so long as I have life and any degree of mental energy remaining, I shall in memory fondly dwell on Scottish names and Scottish associations that are *past;* and in looking onwards to *future* times, I would realize the wish for a virtuous populace poured forth in the prayer of the 'patriot bard':

> O Scotia! my dear, my native soil!
> For whom my warmest wish to heaven is sent;
> Long may thy hardy sons of rustic toil
> Be blest with health, and peace, and sweet content.

In such wishes let all join in heart and tongue. In such feelings let our religious and political differences be forgotten. Let all the various names and forms of church government and church services merge for once into the love of country, so that every son and daughter of Caledonia shall cordially join in those beautiful words of the Scottish paraphrase, which have so often risen with acceptance from the lips of crowded congregations —whether assembled on the Sabbath day in the midst of populous cities, in the retired pastoral districts of the country, or in the wild glens of the Highlands:

> O God of Bethel! by whose hand
> Thy people still are fed:
> Who through this weary pilgrimage
> Hast all our fathers led:
>
> Our vows, our prayers, we now present
> Before thy throne of grace:
> God of our fathers! be the God
> Of their succeeding race.

SECOND SERIES

INTRODUCTORY

DR. CLASON, in his first communication, expressed a wish that something of the same kind should be done for England as had been done in the *Reminiscences* for Scotland. This idea had not only occurred to myself, but I had so far acted upon it as to collect a few materials for its practical illustration. As a subject, therefore, closely allied to the former and the present volume, I would introduce here a few Reminiscences of *English* local and provincial life and character. I do not suppose for a moment that such English reminiscences can have the point and charm which belong to our own national peculiarities; still they may not be devoid of interest. All pictures taken from life of men and manners, whatever be the rank or position of the parties, are instructive. All changes in social life it may be important to study and record. First, then, I would take my reader to a country district in Yorkshire. I was at school in such a locality in very early life, that is, more than fifty years ago; and one circumstance I would notice regarding my position there: I believe at that period (the very beginning of the century) it was about the most retired village in England not of a mountainous district. No turnpike road went through the parish. It lay in the line of no thoroughfare. The only inhabitants of education were the clergyman, a man of great simplicity of character, who had never been at the university, and my great uncle, of above four score, and a recluse. The people were uneducated to an extent now unusual. Nearly all the letters of the village were written by my uncle's gardener, a Scotchman, who, having the degree of education usual with

his countrymen of the profession, and who, being very good-natured, had abundant occupation for his evenings; and being moreover a prudent man and *safe*, he became the depository of nine-tenths of the family secrets of the inhabitants. Being thus ignorant generally, and few of them ever having been twenty miles from the place, I may consider the parish fifty years behind the rest of the world when I went there, so that it now furnishes recollection of rural people, of manners and intelligence dating back a hundred years from the present time. It was indeed a very primitive race, and it is curious to recall the many indications afforded in that obscure village of unmitigated ignorance. With all this were found in full exercise, also, the more violent and vindictive passions of our nature. They might have the simplicity, but not the virtues of Arcadia. We read much in sentimental tales of the innocence of country life, of the native worth and kindly feelings of unsophisticated rural society, and of the happy contrast in these respects of village life with the habits of those who dwell in the crowded population of cities. My early recollections of village life do not bear out these representations. No doubt there were many excellent characters—honest, hard-working, good people; but we were often conversant with scenes of terrible violence, and of frequent drunkenness. Nothing can be more appalling, more loathsome, than the reminiscences which recall, from a past of nearly sixty years, the horrible language, the profane and impure epithets, which occasionally marked the fierce quarrels of our village disputants. One indication of the primitive simplicity and credulity of these villagers was fully developed. There was a most unshaken belief in the existence of *witchcraft* and the power of witches, and one individual in particular was marked as having the power of injuring cattle, and blighting children, and doing many mischievous acts. I can now recall the care with which, in passing this miserable old creature, we schoolboys

used to put our thumb between the first and second finger, pointing it downwards, as the infallible protection against her evil influences. I do not think this individual so suspected was very anxious to *repel* the impeachment. I recollect an old neighbour telling me that on coming from market she had insinuated the charge against her of having 'bad books,' and that she did not positively disown it. It gave her a sort of importance, and made her an object of some fear and awe in the village. Perhaps this may have been not an uncommon feeling in times past, so that a wretched pride in the poor creatures accused of witchcraft may often have led them to *favour* the delusion under which their neighbours judged them. There is an inherent love of power in the human mind, and under that fallacy an old woman in a village may rejoice in the importance of being thought a witch.

There were some old English customs of an interesting nature which lingered in the parish. For example, the old habit of bowing to the altar was retained by the rustics on entering church, bowing respectfully to the clergyman in his place. A copy of the Scriptures was in the vestry *chained* to the desk on which it lay, and where it had evidently been since this mode of introducing the Bible was practised in time of Edward VI. The passing bell was always sounded on notice of the death of a parishioner, and sounded at any hour, night or day, immediately on the event happening. One striking custom prevailed at funerals. The coffin was borne through the village to the churchyard by six or eight bearers of the same age and sex of the deceased. Thus, young maidens in white carried the remains of the girl with whom they had so lately sported. Boys took their playfellow and school-companion to the churchyard. The young married woman was borne by matrons—the men of middle-age did the same office for their contemporary cut off in the pride of manhood; and, though the aged women did not share in this arrangement, yet the old man was carried to the grave by men whose

white locks and feeble steps shewed that they would soon follow their friend and brother. The effect of these processions on a fine summer evening was very striking, especially when, as was often the case, it was preceded by old men, who, bare-headed and with tremulous voices, chanted, as they walked towards the little church, a portion of the ninetieth Psalm, in the quaint old version of Sternhold and Hopkins :

Thou, Lord, hast been our sure defence,
 Our place of ease and rest,
In all time past, yea, so long since,
 As cannot be exprest.
Before was made mountain or hill,
 The earth and world abroad,
From age to age, and always still,
 For ever thou art God.

The lasting of a thousand years,
 What is it in thy sight ;
As yesterday it doth appear,
 Or as a watch by night.
As soon as thou dost scatter them,
 Then is their life and trade
E'en as a sleep, or like the grass,
 Whose beauty soon doth fade.

The worship of the little church was, as may be supposed, extremely simple, and yet, even there, innovation and refinement had appeared in the musical department. The old men who used to execute the psalmody, with the clerk at their head, had been superseded : a teacher of singing had been engaged, and a choir, consisting of maidens, boys, and men, executed various sacred pieces with the assistance of a bassoon and violin. I recollect, in the church, a practice which would have shocked the strict rubricians of the present day. Whenever banns of marriage were proclaimed, immediately after the words ' this is the first, second, or third time of asking ' the old clerk shouted out ' God speed them weel.'

In nothing was the primitive and simple character of the people of this district more remarkable than in the

social position of the clergy amongst them. The livings were all small, so that there was no temptation for ecclesiastics of birth and high position in society to come to the locality. The clergy were in many cases clergy only on Sundays, and for Sunday duty. The rest of the week they were like their people. Engaged in agriculture or horse-breeding, they lived with their servants, and were scarcely raised above the position of farmers. To show the primitive manners of many clergymen, I may mention the case of an usher in my school, who was also curate. He enjoyed the euphonious name of Caleb Longbottom. I recollect his dialect—pure Yorkshire; his coat, a black one only on Sunday, as I suppose he was on week days wearing out his old blue coat which he had before going into orders. Lord Macaulay has been charged that, in describing the humble social condition of the clergy in the reign of Charles II., he has greatly exaggerated their want of refinement and knowledge of the world. But really, from recollection of my friend Mr Longbottom and others at the time I speak of in the reign of George III., I cannot think he has overdrawn the picture. Suppose this incident at a table in our own time:—My uncle lived in what is called in Yorkshire the Hall; and being principal proprietor in the parish, he was, in fact, the squire or great man. The clergy always dined at the hall after evening service, and I recollect the first day the new curate dined. The awkwardness and shyness of the poor man was striking, even to the eyes of a thoughtless schoolboy. He summoned courage to call for beer, and, according to the old custom, deemed it necessary to drink the health of all present before he put the glass to his lips. He addressed first the old gentleman, then the vicar, then myself, and finally, with equal solemnity drank to the servants in attendance—the old butler and the coachman, who were waiting upon the company.

To persons whose ears have been long used to the language and pronunciation of the northern parts of

the island, and to those also associated only with its *southern* modes of speaking, nothing seems more strange, as connected with the locality I am now describing, than the *dialect* of its inhabitants. To the initiated, Yorkshire is often very expressive—very humorous, and even pathetic; but to those unaccustomed to its words and inflections, it must be as a dead language. From my residing in this retired spot so long, and at a period of life when impressions are strong, I had become quite familiarized with the dialect. In fact, we all spoke Yorkshire, and I believe I have never quite lost the tone of it in some words. The dialects of England are a curious subject for observation. They differ in various localities more than most people are at all aware of, and the shades of difference are often very nice and delicate. I do not, of course, now pretend to give anything like an account of the general question. But, in a few examples, I would notice *two* dialects which I have known best, viz. Yorkshire and Somerset. The Yorkshire is very broad, and rich, and racy—quite distinguishable from the Durham and Northumberland of one side, from the Lancashire of another, and the Midland Counties of another. Now, here is a specimen of language such as for many early years of my life I was quite familiar with: 'I say, Bill, wharst thee boun? Cum up,—mak sharp, honey, or I'll pull thee lugs, I will. Cum doun t'cam soid, and tak huom some bumblekoits, or I'll skin thee wick.'[1]

I was much amused by meeting with dialect in Yorkshire *after* I had left school, in company with some natives of the south, who were surprised at the native language, and at my familiarity with it. When at Cambridge, for example, I joined a reading party for the long vacation, and we went with our tutor to Redcar, on the Yorkshire coast, *then* a very retired spot. The

[1] 'I say, Bill, where are you going? Come up, be quick, dear, or I will pull your ears, I will. Come down the bank, and take home some blackberries, or I'll skin ye *alive*.'

first evening we went out for a walk and to see the place. There was a man of Norfolk, a man of Cornwall, a man of Kent, and myself. On coming to the end of a long lane, we met a farmer in a state of excitement, evidently in search of something. His address was: 'I say, as ye coom'd, did ee see out ont mear, doon't lonen?' My companions could not have been more abroad if they had been addressed in Turkish. But, to their surprise, I answered the farmer: 'Yes, we passed it about half way down the lane.' The man meant to put this question: 'Did you see, as you came, anything of a mare in the lane?' There is something very strange in such dialect to persons unaccustomed to it, and the contrasts made by it, with other circumstances, odd and unexpected, and sometimes ludicrous. An unusual dialect will often break a tender or a beautiful association. I recollect a friend of mine feeling the force of this contrast on the occasion of his being at an evening party at Manchester. A young lady was pointed out to him who was considered the belle of the society. She was a very delicate and beautiful girl, and was also considered one of the finest singers in the place. When, therefore, my friend saw one so lovely and so accomplished led to the pianoforte, he formed the highest estimate of the gratification he should receive. This feeling, however, could hardly fail of being a little counteracted by the young lady's accent, and when she began in the broadest Yorkshire tongue to sing 'Oid be a booter floi,' etc., I experienced something of the same feeling. When a very young man I was at Liverpool, and was taken to hear the singing at the Blind Asylum. It was very striking. They were practising an anthem with a new organ, lately erected, and the whole effect, arising from the beauty of the music and the infirmity of the performers, was most touching, and I was moved to tears. On leaving Liverpool next morning, I found myself sitting on the top of the coach, next to a tall blind girl whose notes had mainly produced the emotion

I had experienced. I addressed her, and said I had heard the music at her asylum the night before, and added, 'Your new organ seems a fine one.' The sentiment of the whole matter received a little shock by her answer: 'Ees it be; but she han't gotten in 't troompet poips.' In Somerset the *Saxon* forms of speech still linger, and we are reminded of Chaucer when we hear them say 'He do clothy;' 'she do cooky;' 'he do jeery me.' 'He is a clothier;' 'she cooks;' 'he mocks me.' I recollect asking an old man who was complaining of his fare, why he did not eat his loaf which was on the table. 'I can't eatun, zur; it be soa *vinny*.' I discovered that he meant 'mouldy;' and I found from Rask 'vinny' to be a pure Anglo-Saxon word. I believe it to be a word confined to a particular part of Somersetshire. Amongst the lower orders even, dialects are becoming softened down; and in the upper classes, the joint influence of southern schools and teachers, and of greater facilities of travelling, are tending fast towards obliterating such peculiarities entirely.

It is curious to have noticed amongst the English common people the early effects of the educational system which has now taken deeper root amongst them. I have known persons who had been at school retaining a recollection of words that they had learned, and that, oftentimes, without the slightest apprehension of any meaning attached to them, or, at any rate, of any *right* meaning. There seemed to be just a jingle of words upon the memory, shewing how often mankind, in learning, without due attention being paid to their real mental condition, learn words to which very little proportion of idea is attached. As an example, I recollect a young man, a stage-coachman, who seemed to set up as rather a wag. He had been to school and to church, and he shewed on several occasions a tendency to quote from what he remembered to have heard, without much reference to any meaning attached to it. A young woman, sitting on the box with him, to whom he was

desirous of making himself agreeable, asked him 'Do you drive into Sheffield every day, Mr. Davis?'—to which he answered 'Yes, my dear, day by day continually do cry,' a senseless application of words of the Te Deum which adhered to his memory. Another favourite story of the late Bishop of London illustrates the same use of mere words: An old woman, who lived quite alone and was very helpless, had adopted a little girl from the workhouse, and brought her up till she was about sixteen, when she had become a useful helpmate for her in her household concerns, and was to her as a daughter. The child, however, was persuaded to leave the old woman, and was enticed away to be servant in a farm-house. Some of the neighbours condoling with her, and expressing indignation at the ungrateful conduct of the girl, the poor old woman meekly observed that such things were only to be expected, as we were told in Scripture they *would* happen. She then quoted scriptural authority to that effect, adding, 'You know it is said "Train up a child, and away he do go,"' which was, in fact, the good woman's reading of the well-known passage 'Train up a child in the way he should go,' etc. Another instance of a similar use of the mere words, without regard to any consideration of the meaning, occurred in the case of a rustic parishioner extremely anxious to fulfil his duties as a sponsor to a neighbour's child. The clergyman had laboured hard to get his people to attend to this matter, and audibly and distinctly to make the responses required by the baptismal service. On the occasion I refer to, this godfather was determined to undertake his responsibilities in a bold and manly tone. Not knowing, however, the meaning of the terms used by the clergyman, he thought only of the words which he had himself to pronounce. The first question asked regards the renunciation of the great spiritual enemies of the faith, to which the answer is 'I renounce them all.' But, not knowing that the first question had *already* been asked

and answered, and was passed away, when the clergyman came to the second question, which demands if the sponsor believes in the Trinity, and, in short, in all the articles of the Christian faith, the honest fellow, supposing that this was the *first* question, and therefore, as if reckless of all creeds and councils—as if scorning all decisions of Catholic antiquity and fathers, he shouted triumphantly '*I renounce them all!*'

The small farmers of the west of England whom I remember, were a curious race. They were far behind the present enlightened and improved class of tenants. They were very illiterate—often very stupid in regard to general intelligence. But were, nevertheless, sharp enough in matters that concerned their own interest, and had that acuteness or *mother wit* which is often found in the illiterate. A Somerset clergyman, a friend of mine, who knew the character of the people well, used to say of this class, the old-fashioned farmers, in regard to their *doing* their landlords or the parson: 'We have heard much of witchcraft, and priestcraft, and other crafts, but commend me to native, genuine, unsophisticated *clown-craft.*' They were especially averse to *change* in any of their modes and habits, and when new processes and new inventions were recommended, the invariable answer was, 'Why, zur, it be our way.' And if urged to alter old ways and adopt new ones, as being better, all that could be got from them was 'I be noa scholard' or 'Feather and grandfeather did it afore.' And their fixity of tenure was a remarkable feature of their history. I have heard of farmers whose families had been tenants on their farms from father to son, and without leases, from the reign of Henry VII. Their idol was money; and when they got money, they were essentially *purs-proud.* I knew a man who, as a farmer and maltster, had amassed (for him) a good fortune, and who could nevertheless hardly read or write. When he got into quarrels with his neighbours, he used to slap his pocket, and warn his opponent,

'You'd better not meddle wi' me, I be pretty respectablish *here*.' Riding home from market one day very tipsy, he fell from his horse, and lay helpless in the ditch. There he was overheard saying, 'Here lies ten thousand pound!' But as if he had not done himself justice, and on second thoughts and further consideration, he added, 'Why not say elev'n?'

In Somersetshire I had an opportunity of observing the lingering remnant of a very interesting class of religious characters, I mean the Primitive Methodists, persons who had been actually followers of John Wesley, and who did not go beyond his rules and directions. The race which succeeded them were of a different type of character: less simple in their religious faith—more anxious to make an important sect—and really hostile to the church, which Wesley and his immediate followers never were. There lived in the parish of which I was curate, an old lady, widow of a farmer, whose farm she carried on in conjunction with her son, Mr Sperring. She was a pure Methodist, and had in early life been a frequent hearer of Mr Wesley himself, and used to repeat portions of his sermons which she had remembered. I recollect her saying John Wesley never preached longer than twenty minutes. She was a remarkable person this old lady, and I have often regretted not having taken pains to record her sayings. These had much affinity with the sayings of our old Scottish Presbyterian peasantry, and derived a character and strength from the frequent use of Scripture metaphor and language. The complacent belief expressed by persons of this class of their own superiority in religious matters was very remarkable. Mrs Sperring was just as confident that she had experienced the change of saving conversion at a particular hour and day, which she remembered, as she was of her own existence; that being, as is well known, a leading doctrine of the Methodists. I recollect her telling me that hers occurred in an orchard during a thunderstorm. She had been gathering apples, and at

two o'clock in the afternoon, she felt, as she expressed it, that she had 'passed from the spirit of bondage to fear, into the glorious liberty of a child of God.' And from this persuasion she never deviated, and she lived to be eighty-four. The way she spoke of the religious opinions and acquirements of her neighbours who were not Methodists was very amusing. She used to say of some persons that they were gospel-hardened; of others, that they were devil-hardened. And of clergymen's religious gifts and attainments she would speak in the coolest manner possible. Men of learning and high position in the country she would speak of with pity, as not *knowing* the gospel, and on my pointing to a certain bishop, and saying that he certainly preached the gospel, her quiet reply was, 'Well he do preach the gospel as far as he do *know*.' There was considerable humour in her descriptions, too—as when she gave me an account of the preaching of Archdeacon Thomas, a very learned high church dignitary, who had been rector of a parish in the lower part of Somersetshire in which she had been a farmer's wife. The archdeacon and the Dissenters of his parish had not been on good terms, and he expressed to some of the farmers great indignation at their deserting the church service, and going to listen to the discourse of ignorant and uneducated preachers of the Methodist persuasion. They gave as their reason of preference, that Church clergymen preached from book, but that the Methodists preached without a book. 'Oh,' said the archdeacon, 'if that is all, if you come to church next Sunday, *I* will preach to you without a book.' So when the Sunday came, the church was full, and all eyes and ears were attent upon the learned archdeacon, when he mounted the pulpit to preach without any written paper. According to her description, he began with a description of the ancient people of Israel, and having got them into captivity in Babylon, he was obliged to leave them there, and closed his discourse by saying that there were some matters connected with the

Jewish people which surpassed his knowledge; and so he left them, and preached no more without his MS. On my remonstrating against such a description of Archdeacon Thomas, who was really a great scholar and a learned divine, all she replied was, 'I don't know! but certainly what I heard was neither law nor gospel, spirit nor letter, for it was nothing at all.' Still more amusing was her own account of a conversation she had with her farm servant, of whose abilities and attainments as a divine she had a very low opinion, but who, she heard, had become what was called a *local* preacher amongst the Methodists. So she attacked him: 'Well, John, hast thee become preacher? Thee'lt never sound the trumpet in Zion. Thee'll never be anything but a *ram's-horn* preacher.' However John's answer was not bad: 'Well, Missus, I may be a ram's-horn preacher, but it was the rams' horns that brought down the walls of Jericho!'

These reminiscences of English provincial life and character are but a few specimens of what has occurred to myself in a very limited sphere of observation. I am fully persuaded that many interesting characteristics of men and manners might be preserved, if those who have had more extended and more important fields of knowledge were to record the peculiarities and most striking incidents of social life as it passed before them. Individuals and localities possess their own characteristic features. Classes of men are marked out by peculiarities which must always be curious and interesting subjects for observation. Many *important objects* may be gained by such knowledge of mankind beyond that of mere curiosity; for, in all questions connected with the office of the Christian minister, with the spread of popular education, and, in fact, with all social and moral improvement, it must be of the greatest importance to have an accurate acquaintance with the habits and mental peculiarities of those who are to be dealt with in such matters.

CHAPTER I

ON RELIGIOUS FEELINGS AND RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

I COMMENCE this supplemental volume with the subject that formed the first division of the original work, viz., 'Changes in Religious Feelings and Religious Observances.' In the *Reminiscences* I have noticed many such changes which have taken place in Scotland. It could hardly be otherwise, when we consider the increased facilities of communication between the two countries, a facility which extends to the introduction of English books upon religious subjects. The most popular and engaging works connected with the Church of England have now a free circulation in Scotland, and it is impossible that such productions as *The Christian Year*, for example, and many others—whether for good or bad is not now the question—should not produce their effects upon minds trained in the strictest school of Calvinistic theology. I should be disposed to *extend* the boundaries of this division, and to include under 'Religious Feelings and Religious Observances' many anecdotes which belong perhaps rather indirectly than directly to the subject. Thus it has struck me that on a subject closely allied with religious feelings a great change has taken place in Scotland during a period of less than fifty years—I mean the attention paid to cemeteries as depositories of the mortal remains of those who have departed. In my early days I never recollect seeing any efforts made for the embellishment and adornment of our churchyards; if tolerably secured by fences, enough had been done. The English and Welsh practices of planting flowers, keeping the turf smooth and dressed

over the graves of friends, were quite unknown. Indeed, I suspect such attention fifty years ago would have been thought by the sterner Presbyterians as somewhat savouring of superstition. The account given by Sir W. Scott, in *Guy Mannering*, of an Edinburgh burial-place was universally applicable to Scottish sepulchres.[1] A very different state of matters has grown up within the last few years. Cemeteries and churchyards are now as carefully ornamented in Scotland as in England. Shrubs, flowers, smooth turf, and neatly kept gravel walks, are a pleasing accompaniment to headstones, crosses, and varied forms of monumental memorials, in freestone, marble, and granite. Nay, more than these, not unfrequently we see an imitation of French sentiment, in wreaths of 'everlasting' placed over graves as emblems of immortality; and in one of our Edinburgh cemeteries, I have seen these enclosed in glass cases, to preserve them from the effects of wind and rain.

In consequence of neglect, the unprotected state of churchyards was evident from the number of stories in circulation connected with the circumstance of timid and excited passengers going amongst the tombs of the village. The following, amongst others, has been communicated. The *locale* of the story is unknown, but it is told of a weaver who, after enjoying his potations, pursued his way home through the churchyard, his vision and walking somewhat impaired. As he proceeded, he diverged from the path, and unexpectedly stumbled into a partially made grave. Stunned for a while, he lay in wonder at his descent, and after some time he got out, but he had not proceeded much farther when a similar calamity befell him. At this second

[1] 'This was a square enclosure in the Greyfriars' Churchyard, guarded on one side by a veteran angel without a nose, and having only one wing, who had the merit of having maintained his post for a century, while his comrade cherub, who had stood sentinel on the corresponding pedestal, lay a broken trunk, among the hemlock, burdock, and nettles which grew in gigantic luxuriance around the walls of the mausoleum.'

fall, he was heard, in a tone of wonder and surprise, to utter the following exclamation, referring to what he considered the untenanted graves: 'Ay! ir ye a' up an' awa?' In the same class of mortuary reminiscences, we may place the novelty lately introduced amongst us of having stained-glass windows in churches, as memorials of the departed.[1]

In connection with the awful subject of death and all its concomitants, it has been often remarked, that the older generation of Scottish people used to view the circumstances belonging to the decease of their nearest and dearest friends with a coolness which does not at first sight seem consistent with their deep and sincere religious impressions. Amongst the peasantry, this was sometimes manifested in an extraordinary and startling manner. I do not believe that those persons had less affection for their friends than a corresponding class in England, but they had less awe of the concomitants of death, and approached them with more familiarity. For example, I remember long ago at Fasque, my sister-in-law visiting a worthy and attached old couple, of whom the husband, Charles Duncan, who had been gardener at Fasque for above thirty years, was evidently dying. He was sitting on a common deal chair, and on my sister proposing to send down for his use an old armchair—which she recollected was laid up in a garret—his wife exclaimed against such a needless trouble. 'Hout, my lady, what would he be duin' wi' an armchair; he's just deein' fast awa?' I have two anecdotes, illustrative of the same state of feeling, from a lady of ancient Scottish family, accustomed to visit her poor dependants on the property, and to notice their ways. She was calling at a decent cottage, and found the occupant busy carefully ironing out some linens—

[1] Distinguished examples of these are to be found in the New Greyfriars' Church, Edinburgh, and in the Cathedral of Glasgow; to say nothing of the beautiful specimens in St John's Episcopal Chapel, Edinburgh.

the lady remarked, 'Those are fine linens you have got there, Janet.' 'Troth, mem,' was the reply, 'they're just the gudeman's *deed* claes, and there are nane better i' the parish.' On another occasion, when visiting an excellent woman, to condole with her on the death of her nephew, with whom she had lived, and whose loss must have been severely felt by her; she remarked, 'What a nice white cap you have got, Margaret.' 'Indeed, mem, ay, sae it is; for ye see the gude lad's winding-sheet was ower lang, and I cut aff as muckle as made twa bonny mutches' (caps).

Under the present head there is a subject connected with the expression of religious opinion, on which I must think a great change has taken place within the last fifty years—I refer to the quaint, and frequently irreverent, manner in which sacred subjects were referred to by the older Scottish race—they did not *mean* to be irreverent or profane, but no doubt they appeared so to a more refined but not really a more religious generation.

It seems to me that this plainness of speech arose in part from the *sincerity* of their belief in all the circumstances of another condition of being. They spoke of things hereafter as positive certainties, and viewed things invisible through the same medium as they viewed things present. I have alluded to this matter in the anecdote related at p. 46, of Miss Johnstone. The following is equally illustrative, and I am assured of its perfect authenticity and literal correctness: 'Joe M'Pherson and his wife lived in Inverness. They had two sons, who helped their father in his trade of a smith. They were industrious and careful, but not successful. The old man had bought a house, leaving a large part of the price unpaid. It was the ambition of his life to pay off that debt, but it was too much for him, and he died in the struggle. His sons kept on the business with the old industry, and with better fortune. At last their old mother fell sick, and told her sons she was

dying, as in truth she was. The elder son said to her "Mother, you'll soon be with my father; no doubt you'll have much to tell him; but dinna forget this, mother, mind ye, tell him *the house is freed.* He'll be glad to hear that." '

A similar feeling is manifest in the following conversation, which, I am assured, is authentic: At Hawick, the people used to wear wooden clogs, which make a *clanking* noise on the pavement. A dying old woman had some friends by her bedside, who said to her 'Weel, Jenny, ye are gaun to Heeven, an' gin you should see our folk, ye can tell them that we're a' weel.' To which Jenny replied, 'Weel, gin I shud see them I'se tell them, but you manna expect that I am to gang clank clanking through Heeven looking for your folk.'

But of all stories of this class, I think the following death-bed conversation, between a Scottish husband and wife, is about the richest specimen of a dry Scottish matter-of-fact view of a very serious ques ion: An old shoemaker in Glasgow was sitting by the bedside of his wife, who was dying. She took him by the hand. 'Weel, John, we're gawin to part. I hae been a gude wife to you, John.' 'Oh just middling, just middling, Jenny,' said John, not disposed to commit himself. 'John,' says she, 'ye maun promise to bury me in the auld kirkyard at Stra'von, beside my mither. I couldna rest in peace among unco folk, in the dirt and smoke o' Glasgow.' 'Weel, weel, Jenny, my woman,' said John soothingly, 'we'll just pit you in the Gorbals *first,* and gin ye dinna lie quiet, we'll try you sine in Stra'von.'

There was something very striking in the homely, quaint, and severe expressions on religious subjects which marked the old-fashioned piety of persons shadowed forth in Sir Walter Scott's Davie Deans. I have already referred in the *Reminiscences,* p. 17, to the shepherd of Bonaly, and his rebuke of Lord Rutherfurd's remark about the east wind, but an admirable addition to that scene was the shepherd's answer to Lord Cockburn, the

proprietor of Bonaly. He was sitting on the hillside with the shepherd, and observing the sheep reposing in the coldest situation, he observed to him, 'John, if I were a sheep, I would lie on the other side of the hill.' The shepherd answered, 'Ay, my lord, but if ye had been a sheep ye would hae had mair sense.'

The sort of unimaginative and matter-of-fact view of things connected with the other world extended to a very youthful age, as in the case of the little boy who, when told of Heaven, put the question, 'An' will Faather be there?' His instructress answered, 'Of course, she hoped he would be there;' to which he sturdily at once replied, 'Then I'll no gang.'

We might apply these remarks in some measure to the Scottish pulpit ministrations of an older school, in which a minuteness of detail and a quaintness of expression were quite common, but which could not now be tolerated. I have two specimens of such antiquated language, supplied by correspondents, and I am assured they are both genuine.

The first is given on the authority of a St Andrews Professor, who is stated to be a great authority in such narratives.

In one of our northern counties, a rural district had its harvest operations seriously affected by continuous rains. The crops being much laid, wind was desired in order to restore them to a condition fit for the sickle. A minister, in his Sabbath services, expressed their wants in prayer as follows: 'O Lord, we pray thee to send us wind, no a rantin', tantin', tearin' wind, but a noohin' (noughin?), soughin', winnin' wind.' More expressive words than these could not be found in any language, and it is believed the story has not been published.

The other story relates to a portion of the Presbyterian service on sacramental occasions, called 'fencing the tables,' i.e. prohibiting the approach of those who were unworthy to receive.

This fencing of the tables was performed in the follow-

ing effective manner by an old divine, whose flock transgressed the third commandment, not in a gross and loose manner, but in its minor details: 'I debar all those who use such minced oaths as Faith! Troth! Losh! Gosh! and Lovanenty!'

There was a system connected with Scottish church discipline which has undergone a great change in my time, I mean the public censure from the pulpit, in the time of divine service, of offenders previously convicted before the minister and his kirk session. This was performed by the guilty person standing up before the congregation on a raised platform, called the *cutty stool*, and receiving a rebuke. I never saw it done, but have heard in my part of the country of the discipline being enforced occasionally. Indeed, I recollect an instance where the rebuke was thus administered, and received under circumstances that made the scene very striking, and to partake of the moral sublime. The daughter of the minister had herself committed such an offence against moral purity, as usually called forth this church censure. The minister peremptorily refused to make her an exception to his ordinary practice. His child stood up in the congregation, and received, from her agonized father, a rebuke similar to that administered to other members of his congregation for a like offence. The spirit of the age was unfavourable to the practice. The rebuke on the cutty stool, like the penance in a white sheet in England, went out of use, and the circumstance is now a matter of 'reminiscence.' I have received some communications on the subject, which bear upon this point; and I subjoin the following remarks from a kind correspondent, a clergyman, to whom I am largely indebted, as indicating the great change which has taken place in this matter.

Church discipline, he writes, was much more vigorously enforced in olden time than it is now. A certain couple having been guilty of illicit intercourse, within the forbidden degrees, appeared before the Presbytery of Lan-

ark, and made confession in sackcloth. They were ordered to return to their own session, and to stand, according to the injunction of the session, at the kirk-door, barefoot and barelegged, from the second bell to the last, and thereafter in the public place of repentance; and, at direction of the session, thereafter to go through the whole kirks of the presbytery, and to satisfy them in like manner. If such penance were now enforced for like offences, we believe the registration books of many parishes in Scotland would become more creditable in certain particulars than they unfortunately are at the present time.

Mr Small, a former minister of the parish of Stair, in Ayrshire, joined this discipline with much kindness to his parishioners. He was accustomed on stormy Sundays to take his congregation into a public house, contiguous to the church, and give them a short service over the back of a chair. At the conclusion he treated them to a few tankards of ale, and dismissed them in comfort to their several abodes. It is said, that he occasionally had broth provided for them by the ale-wife, which they received in addition to the ale. The repentance stool, nevertheless, was in use in his time, although it died out as in other places. A young farmer being cited to appear upon it on a certain Sunday; on the previous evening he called upon the beadle, whom he bribed to open the church door, and having seized the abominated stool, he broke it into a thousand pieces, which was easily done, as it was far decayed. On the following day it could not be found, and it was never again replaced.

But there was a less formidable ecclesiastical censure occasionally given by the minister from the pulpit, like those referred to at pp. 104 and 112, in the *Reminiscences*, against *sleeping* in church, and other misdemeanours which took place under his own eye. A most amusing specimen of such censure was one inflicted by the minister upon his own wife, for an offence not in our day

visited with so heavy a penalty. The clergyman had observed one of his flock asleep during his sermon. He paused, and called him to order. 'Jeems Robson, ye are sleepin', I insist on your wauking when God's word is preached to ye.' 'Weel, sir, you may look at your ain seat, and ye'll see a sleeper forbye me,' answered Jeems, pointing to the clergyman's lady in the minister's pew. 'Then, Jeems,' said the minister, 'when ye see my wife asleep again, haud up your hand.' By and by the arm was stretched out, and sure enough the fair lady was caught in the act. Her husband solemnly called upon her to stand up and receive the censure due to her offence. He thus addressed her: 'Mrs. B., a'body kens that when I got ye for my wife, I got nae beauty. Yer frien's ken that I got nae siller; and if I dinna get God's grace, I shall hae a puir bargain indeed.'

There are many anecdotes which might be added to those already recorded, as showing the very strong feeling existing in the Scottish mind on Sabbath observance. But I do not know one which is more to the purpose than the following: At a certain time, the hares in the neighbourhood of a Scottish burgh had, from the inclemency of the season or from some other cause, become emboldened more than usual to approach the dwelling-places of men; so much so that on one Sunday morning a hare was seen skipping along the street as the people were going to church. An old man spying puss in this unusual position, significantly remarked, 'Ay, yon beast kens weel it is the Sabbath-day;' taking it for granted that no one in the place would be found audacious enough to hurt the animal on a Sunday.

Lady Macneil supplies an excellent pendant to Miss Stuart's story about the clock going on the Sunday. Her hen wife had got some Dorking fowls, and on Lady M. asking if they were laying many eggs, she replied, with great earnestness: 'Indeed, my leddy, they lay every day, no' excepting the blessed Sabbath.'

There were, however, old persons at that time who were not quite so orthodox on the point of Sabbath observance, and of these a lady residing in Dumfries was known often to employ her wet Sundays in arranging her wardrobe. 'Preserve us!' she said on one occasion, 'anither gude Sunday! I dinna ken whan I'll get thae drawers red up.'

On this point of changes in religious feeling, I may notice that we had within the scope of these Reminiscences a character in Aberdeenshire, which has now gone out—I mean the popular and universally well-received Roman Catholic priest. Religious differences, and strong prejudices, seem at the present time to draw a more decided line of separation between the priest and his Protestant countrymen. As examples of what is past, I would refer to the case of a genial and Romish bishop in Ross-shire. It is well known that private stills were prevalent in the Highlands fifty or sixty years ago, and no one thought there was any harm in them. This good bishop, whose name I forget, was (as I heard the late W. Mackenzie of Muirton assure a party at Dunrobin Castle) several years previously a famous hand at brewing a good glass of whisky, and that he distributed his mountain dew with a liberal and impartial hand alike to Catholic and to Protestant friends. Of this class, I recollect, certainly forty-five years ago, priest Gordon, a genuine Aberdonian, and a man beloved by all, rich and poor. He was a sort of chaplain to Menzies of Pitfodels, and visited in all the country families round Aberdeen. I remember once his being at Banchory Lodge, and thus apologizing to my aunt for going out of the room: 'I beg your pardon, Mrs Forbes, for leaving you, but I maun just gae doun to the garden and say mi bit wordies,' these 'bit wordies' being in fact the portion of the Breviary which he was bound to recite—so easily and pleasantly were those matters then referred to.

The following, however, is a still richer illustration,

and I am assured it is genuine: 'Towards the end of the last century, a worthy Roman Catholic clergyman, well known as "Priest Matheson," and universally respected in the district, had charge of a mission in Aberdeenshire, and for a long time made his journeys on a piebald pony, the priest and his "Pyet Shelty" sharing an affectionate recognition wherever they came. On one occasion, however, he made his appearance on a steed of a different description, and passing near a Seceding meeting-house, he forgathered with the minister, who, after the usual kindly greetings, missing the familiar pony said, "Ou Priest! fat's come o' the auld Pyet?" "He's deid, minister." "Weel, he was an auld faithfu' servant, and ye wad nae doot gie him the offices o' the Church?" "Na, minister," said his friend, not quite liking this allusion to his priestly offices, "I didna dee that, for ye see he *turned Seceder afore he deed, an' I buried him like a beast.*" He then rode quietly away. This worthy man, however, could, when occasion required, rebuke with seriousness as well as point. Always a welcome guest at the houses of both clergy and gentry, he is said on one occasion to have met with a laird, whose hospitality he had thought it proper to decline, and on being asked the reason for the interruption of his visits, answered, "Ye ken, an' I ken, but, laird! God kens."'

I have already, in these *Reminiscences*, referred to a custom which I recollect was always practised in the church of Fettercairn during my boyish days, viz. that of the minister, Mr Foote, bowing to the heritors in succession who occupied the front gallery seats, and I am assured that this bowing from the pulpit to the principal heritor or heritors after the blessing had been pronounced was very common in rural parishes till about forty years ago, and perhaps till a still later period. And when heritors chanced to be pretty equally matched, there was sometimes an unpleasant contest as to who was entitled to the precedence in having the *first* bow.

A case of this kind once occurred in the parish of Lanark, which was carried so far as to be laid before the Presbytery, but they not considering themselves 'competent judges of the points of honour and precedency among gentlemen, and, to prevent all inconveniency in these matters in the future, appointed the minister to forbear bowing to gentlemen from the pulpit for the time to come; and they also appointed four of their number 'to wait upon the gentlemen to deal with them, for bringing them to condescend to submit hereunto, for the success of the gospel, and the peace of the parish.'

In connection with this subject, we may mention a ready and complimentary reply once made by the late Reverend Dr Wightman of Kirkmahoe, on being rallied for his neglecting this usual act of courtesy one Sabbath in his own church. The heritor who was entitled to, and always received this token of respect, was P. Miller, Esquire, proprietor of Dalswinton. One Sabbath the Dalswinton pew contained a bevy of ladies, but no gentlemen, and the Doctor—perhaps because he was a bachelor and felt a delicacy in the circumstances—omitted the usual salaam in their direction. A few days after, meeting Miss Miller, who was widely famed for her great beauty, and who afterwards became Countess of Mar, she rallied him, in presence of her companions, for not bowing to her from the pulpit on the previous Sunday, and requested an explanation, when the good Doctor immediately replied, 'I beg your pardon, Miss Miller, but you surely know that angel worship is not allowed in the Church of Scotland;' and lifting his hat, he made a low bow, and passed on.

Scottish congregations, in some parts of the country, contain an element in their composition quite unknown in English churches. In pastoral parts of the country, it is usual for each shepherd to bring his faithful collie-dog—at least it was so some years ago. In a district of Sutherland, where the population is very scanty, the congregations are made up one-half of dogs, each human

member having his canine companion. These dogs sit out the Gaelic services and sermon with commendable patience, till towards the end of the last psalm, when there is a universal stretching and yawning, and they are all ready to scamper out, barking in a most excited manner whenever the blessing is commenced. The congregation of one of these churches determined that the service should close in a more decorous manner, and steps were taken to attain this object. Accordingly, when a stranger clergyman was officiating, he found the people all sitting when he was about to pronounce the blessing. He hesitated, and paused, expecting them to rise, till an old shepherd looking up to the pulpit, said, 'Say awa', sir, we're a' sitting to cheat the dowgs.'

I remember in the parish church of Fettercairn, though it must be sixty years ago, a custom—still lingering, I believe, in some parts of the country—of the precentor reading each single line before it was sung by the congregation. This practice gave rise to a somewhat unlucky introduction of a line from the first psalm. In a church in the west of Scotland the communion tables are placed in the centre of the church. After sermon and prayer, the seats round these tables are occupied by the communicants while a psalm is being sung. One communion Sabbath, the precentor observed the noble family of —— approaching the tables, and likely to be kept out by those pressing in before them. Being very zealous for their accommodation, he called out to an individual whom he considered the principal obstacle in clearing the passage: 'Come back, Jock, and let in the noble family of ——,' and then, turning to his psalm-book, took up his duty, and went on to read the line 'Nor stand in sinners' way.'

The old Scottish hearers were very particular on the subject of their minister's preaching old sermons; and to repeat a discourse which they could recollect was always made a subject of animadversion by those who heard it. A beadle who was a good deal of a wit in his

way, gave a sly hit in his pretended defence of his minister on the question. As they were proceeding from church, the minister observed the beadle had been laughing as if he had triumphed over some of the parishioners with whom he had been in conversation. On asking the cause of this, he received for answer, "Indeed, sir, they were saying ye had preached an auld sermon to-day, but I tackled them, for I tauld them it was no an au'd sermon, for the minister had preached it no sax months syne.'

I remember the minister of Banchory, Mr Gregory, availed himself of the feelings of his people on this subject for the purpose of accomplishing a particular object. During the building of the new church, the service had to be performed in a schoolroom, which did not nearly hold the congregation. The object was to get part of the parish to attend in morning, and part in afternoon. Mr Gregory prevented those who had attended in the morning from returning in the afternoon by just giving them, as he said, 'cauld kail het again.'

It is somewhat remarkable, however, that, notwithstanding this feeling in the matter of a repetition of old sermons, there was amongst a large class of Scottish preachers of a former day such a sameness of subject as really sometimes made it difficult to distinguish the discourse of one Sunday from amongst others. These were entirely doctrinal, and however they might commence, after the opening or introduction, hearers were certain to find the preacher falling gradually into the old channel. The fall of man in Adam, his restoration in Christ, justification by faith, and the terms of the new covenant formed the staple of each sermon, and without which it was not in fact reckoned complete as an orthodox exposition of Christian doctrine. Without omitting the essentials of Christian instruction, preachers now take a wider view of illustrating and explaining the gospel scheme of salvation and regeneration, without constant recurrence to the elemental and

fundamental principles of the faith. From my friend Dr Cook of Haddington (who it is well known has a copious stock of old Scotch traditionary anecdotes), I have an admirable illustration of this state of things as regards pulpit instruction.

'Much of the preaching of the Scotch clergy,' Dr Cook observes, 'in the last century was almost exclusively doctrinal. The fall—the nature, the extent, and the application of the remedy. In the hands of able men, no doubt, there might be much variety of exposition, but with weaker or indolent men, preaching extempore, or without notes, it too often ended in a weekly repetition of what had been already said. An old elder of mine, whose recollection might reach back from sixty to seventy years, said to me one day: "Nowadays, people make a work if a minister preach the same sermon over again in the course of two or three years. When I was a boy, we would have wondered if old Mr W—— had preached anything else than what we had heard the Sunday before." My old friend used to tell of a clergyman who had held forth on the broken covenant till his people longed for a change. The elders waited on him to intimate their wish. They were examined on their knowledge of the subject, found deficient, rebuked, and dismissed, but after a while they returned to the charge, and the minister gave in. Next Lord's Day he read a large portion of the history of Joseph and his brethren, as the subject of a lecture. He paraphrased it greatly, no doubt, to the detriment of the original, but much to the satisfaction of his people, for it was something new. He finished the paraphrase, "And now," says he, "my friends, we shall proceed to draw some lessons and inferences; and 1st, you will observe that the sacks of Joseph's brethren were *ripit*, and in them was found the cup; so your sacks will be ripit at the day of judgment, and the first thing found in them will be the broken covenant," and, having gained this advantage, the sermon went off into the usual strain, and

embodied the usual heads of elementary dogmatic theology.'

More importance seems to have been attached to funeral celebrations than is done at present. To the kindness of Rev. Mr Hogg of Kirkmahoe, I am indebted for examples of this, as well as for other interesting communications. There used to be a great competition among elders in praying at funerals in the absence of a clergyman. Those who had a great gift in this way, went far and wide to such solemnities, even when not invited, as they considerately said, their services *might* be required. At a funeral in the parish of Straiton, Ayrshire, one of these worthies was present, called John Stewart, and was called upon to officiate. As his great rival, David Stevenson, from a neighbouring parish, was not there, and he saw he would have both to ask the blessing and give thanks, he reserved his great strength for the latter, when all his set phrases and pathetic sentiments were to come forth like a strong army, doing great execution. In fact the *blessing*, even in his own estimation, was a so-and-so affair. It was to the *thanks* he looked forward with triumph. To his great chagrin, however, on opening his eyes after the first performance, his rival David was standing full before him, and after the service, he was called on to give thanks, which he did with the greatest effect, completely extinguishing poor John, and unanimously bearing away the palm. John felt his defeat most keenly, and could not conceal his mortification. On his way to the churchyard, he hinted to two or three beside him his ability to eclipse David, and proposed that after the interment they should adjourn to the public house, and order bread and cheese, and ale, to afford him an opportunity of proving his ability over his antagonist. The proposal was agreed to, and John held forth with the greatest unction for nearly half an hour.

The Rev. Mr Laurie of Kirkmichael, Ayrshire, was in the habit of giving an exhortation to those attending a

funeral, after the grave was filled up. On the last occasion that he thus addressed them, William M'Murtie, keeper of the village inn, was at the funeral, and had got something more than enough. He was on very intimate terms with the minister. William saw the trouble which it took to replace a very large '*through stane*' on the grave, and when the minister began to intimate that though they now put dust to dust, yet the day was not far distant when he would assuredly rise again. 'My faith,' said William, 'if ye ettle him to rise again, ye're no his freen' to put that stane on him, for the rest will be up and past the Clawbag wood, afore he get frae 'neath it, and the stour shaken aff him.'

Some of the elders were great humorists and originals in their way. An elder of the kirk at Muthill used to manifest his humour and originality by his mode of collecting the alms. As he went round with the ladle, he used to remind such members of the congregation as seemed backward in their duty, by giving them a poke with the 'brod,' and making, in an audible whisper, such remarks as these: 'Wife at the braid mailin, mind the puir;' 'Lass wi' the braw plaid, mind the puir,' etc., a mode of collecting which marks rather a bygone state of things.

One question connected with religious feeling, and the manifestation of religious feeling, has become a settled point among us, since fifty years have expired. I mean the question of attendance by clergymen on theatrical representations. Dr Carlyle had himself been prosecuted before the General Assembly in 1757 for being present at the performance of the Tragedy of Douglas, by his friend John Home. He was acquitted, however, and writes thus on the subject.

'Although the clergy in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood had abstained from the theatre, because it gave offence, yet the more remote clergymen, when occasionally in town, had almost universally attended the playhouse. It is remarkable that in the year 1784, when the

great actress Mrs Siddons first appeared in Edinburgh, during the sitting of the General Assembly, that Court was obliged to fix all its important business for the alternate days when she did not act, as all the younger members, clergy as well as laity, took their stations in the theatre on those days by three in the afternoon.'

Drs Robertson and Blair, although they cultivated the acquaintance of Mrs Siddons in private, were amongst those clergymen referred to by Dr Carlyle, who abstained from attendance in the theatre; but Dr Carlyle states, that they regretted not taking the opportunity of witnessing a display of her talent, and of giving their sanction to the theatre as a place of recreation. Dr Carlyle evidently considered it a narrow-minded intolerance and bigoted fanaticism, that clergymen should be excluded from that amusement. At a period far later than 1784, the same opinion prevailed in some quarters. I recollect when such indulgence on the part of clergymen was treated with much leniency, especially for Episcopalian clergy. I do not mean to say, that there was anything like a general feeling in favour of clerical theatrical attendance, but there can be no question of a feeling far less strict than what exists in our own time. As I have said, thirty-six years ago some clergymen went to the theatre, and a few years before that, when my brothers and I were passing through Edinburgh, in going backward and forward to school, at Durham, with our tutor, a licentiate of the Established Church of Scotland, and who afterwards attained considerable eminence in the Free Church, we certainly went with him to the theatre there, and at Durham, very frequently. We may consider the question now fully decided, as regards Scotland. I feel quite assured, no clergyman could expect to retain the respect of his people or of the public, of whom it was known that he attended theatrical representations. It is so understood. I had opportunities of conversing with the late Mr Murray, of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, and with Mr Charles Kean on the

subject. Both admitted the fact, and certainly if any men of the profession *could* have removed the feeling from the public mind, these were the men to have done it.

There is a phase of religious observances which has undergone a great change amongst us within fifty years. I mean the services and circumstances connected with the administration of the Holy Communion. When these occurred in a parish they were called 'occasions,' and the great interest excited by these sacramental solemnities may be gathered from *Peter's Letters*, *The Annals of the Parish*, and Burns' poem. Such ceremonials are now conducted, I believe, just as the ordinary Church services. Some years back they were considered a sort of preaching matches. Ministers vied with each other in order to bear away the bell in popularity, and hearers embraced the opportunity in exhibiting to one another their powers of criticism on what they heard and saw. In the parish of Urr, Dumfriesshire, on one sacramental occasion, some of the assistants invited were eminent ministers in Edinburgh; Dr Scot, of St Michael's, Dumfries, was the only local one who was asked, and he was, in his own sphere, very popular as a preacher. A brother clergyman complimenting him upon the honour of being so invited, the old bald-headed divine modestly replied, 'Gude bless you, man, what can I do? They're a' han' wailed[1] this time; I need never show face among them.' 'Ye're quite mista'en,' was the soothing encouragement, 'tak' your *Resurrection* (a well-known service used for such occasions by him), an' I'll lay my lug ye'll beat every clute o' them.' The Doctor did as suggested, and exerted himself to the utmost, and it appears he did not exert himself in vain. A batch of old women, on their way home after the conclusion of the services, were overheard discussing the merits of the several preachers who had that day addressed them from the tent. 'Leeze me abune them a',' said one of the company who had waxed warm in the discussion, 'for

[1] Carefully selected.

yon auld clear-headed (bald) man, that said "Raphael sings an' Gabriel strikes his goolden harp, an' a' the angels clap their wings wi' joy." O but it was gran', it just put me in min' o' our geese at Dunjarg when they turn their nebs to the south an' clap their wings when they see the rain's comin' after lang drooth.'

There is a subject closely allied with the religious feelings of a people, and that is the subject of their *superstitions*. To enter upon that question, in a general view, especially in reference to the Highlands, is far too wide a field for the present occasion. But I am supplied with an account of a peculiar superstition regarding swine which existed some years ago among the lower orders of the east coast of Fife. I can observe, in my own experience, a great change to have taken place amongst Scotch people generally on this subject. Horror of the 'unclean animal' still lingers in the Highlands, but seems in the lowland districts to have yielded to a sense of its thrift and usefulness.[1] The account given by my correspondent is too curious to be omitted. I give it as I received it.

Among the many superstitious notions and customs prevalent among the lower orders of the fishing towns on the east coast of Fife, till very recently, that class entertained a great horror of swine, and even at the very mention of the word. If that animal crossed their path when about to set out on a sea voyage, they considered it so unlucky an omen that they would not venture off. A clergyman of one of these fishing villages having mentioned this superstition to a clerical friend, and finding that he was rather incredulous on the subject, in order to convince him told him he would allow him an opportunity of testing the truth of it by allowing him to preach for him the following day. It was arranged that his friend was to read the chapter relating to the

[1] I recollect an old Scottish gentleman, who shared this horror, asking very gravely, 'Were not swine forbidden under the law, and cursed under the gospel?'

herd of swine into which the evil spirits were cast. Accordingly, when the first verse was read in which the unclean beast was mentioned, a slight commotion was observable among the audience, each one of them putting his or her hand on any near piece of iron—a nail on the seat or bookboard, or to the nails on their shoes. At the repetition of the word again and again, more commotion was visible, and the words 'cauld airn' (cold iron), the antidote to this baneful spell, were heard issuing from various corners of the church. And finally, on his coming over the hated word again, when the whole herd ran violently down the bank into the sea, the alarmed parishioners, irritated beyond bounds, rose and all left the church in bodies.

The great change—the great improvement, I would say—which has taken place during the last half century in the feelings and practical relations of religion with social life is, that it has become more diffused through all ranks and all characters. Before that period many good sort of people were afraid of making a special religious profession, and were always separated from those who did. Persons who made a profession at all beyond the low standard generally adopted in society were marked out as objects of fear or of distrust. The anecdote at page 16 regarding the practice of family prayer fully proves this. Now religious people and religion itself are not kept aloof from the ordinary current of men's thoughts and actions. There is no such marked line as used to be drawn round persons who make a decided profession of religion. Christian men and women have stepped over the line, and without compromising their Christian principle, are not necessarily either morose, uncharitable, or exclusive. The effects of the separation were injurious to men's minds. Religion was with many associated with puritanism, with cant, and unfitness for the world. There was an impression too, not unnatural on many minds, that the almost exclusive reference to doctrinal subjects, and the dread of upholding the law,

and of enforcing its more minute details, were not favourable to the cause of moral rectitude and practical holiness of life. This was hinted in a sly way by a young member of the kirk to his old-fashioned father, a minister of the severe and high Calvinistic school. Old Dr Lockhart of Glasgow was lamenting one day, in the presence of his son John, the fate of a man who had been found guilty of immoral practices, and the more so that he was one of his own elders; remarked his son, 'Well, father, you see what you've driven him to.'

The same feeling came forth with much point and humour on an occasion referred to in Carlyle's *Memoirs*. In a company where John Home and David Hume were present, much wonder was expressed what *could* have induced a clerk belonging to Sir William Forbes' bank to abscond, and embezzle £900. 'I know what it was,' said Home to the historian, 'for when he was taken there was found in his pocket a volume of your philosophical works and Boston's *Fourfold State*'—a hit, 1st, at the infidel, whose principles would have undermined Christianity; and 2nd, a hit at the Church, which had expelled him for writing the tragedy of Douglas.

CHAPTER II

ON OLD SCOTTISH CONVIVIALITY

In adding a few materials to Reminiscences regarding the former *convivial* habits of Scottish social life, one cannot help looking back with amazement at the infatuation which could for a moment tolerate such a sore evil. To a man of sober inclinations, it must have been an intolerable nuisance to join a dinner party at many houses, where he knew he should have to witness the most disgusting excesses in others, and to fight hard to preserve himself from a compliance with the example of those around him. A friend of mine, lately departed, Mr Boswell of Balmuto, found himself in this situation. Challenged by the host to drink, urged and almost forced to swallow a quantity of wine against his own inclination, he proposed a counter challenge in the way of eating, and made the following ludicrous and original proposal to the company, that two or three legs of mutton should be prepared, and he would then contest the point of who could devour most meat; and certainly it seems as reasonable to compel people to *eat*, as to compel them to drink, beyond the natural cravings of nature.

The situation of ladies, too, must frequently have been very disagreeable, when, for instance, gentlemen came upstairs in a condition most unfit for female society. Indeed they were often compelled to fly from scenes in the house most unfitting for them to witness. They were expected to get out of the way at the proper time, or when a hint was given them to do so. At Glasgow forty years ago, when the time had come for the *bowl* to be introduced, some jovial and thirsty member of

the company proposed as a toast 'The trade of Glasgow and *the outward bound;*' the hint was taken, and silks and satins moved off to the drawing-room.

Reference is made at page 22 to Lord Hermand's opinion of drinking, and of the high estimation in which he held it, according to the testimony of Lord Cockburn. There is a remarkable corroboration of this opinion in a current anecdote which is traditionary regarding the learned judge. A case of some great offence was tried before him, and the counsel pleaded extenuation for his client in that he was *drunk* when he committed the offence. 'Drunk!' exclaimed Lord Hermand, in great indignation; 'if he could do such a thing when he was drunk, what might he not have done when he was *sober!*'—evidently implying that the normal condition of human nature and its most hopeful one, was a condition of intoxication.

Of the prevalence of hard drinking in certain houses, a remarkable proof is given at page 27. The following is a capital anecdote for the subject, and corresponds exactly with the story of the 'loosing the cravats,' which was performed for guests in a state of helpless inebriety by one of the household. There had been a carousing party at Colonel Grant's, the late Lord Seafield, and as the evening advanced towards morning, two Highlanders were in attendance to carry the guests upstairs, it being understood that none could by any other means arrive at their sleeping apartments. One or two of the guests, however, whether from their abstinence or their superior strength of head, were walking upstairs, and declined the proffered assistance. The attendants were utterly astonished, and indignantly exclaimed, 'Aigh, it's sare cheenged times at Castle Grant, when gentlemens can gang to bed on their ain feet.'

No feature of this intemperance was more revolting than its introduction at funeral solemnities. Examples of this abominable practice have already been given in the *Reminiscences*. I am assured of the truth of the

following anecdote by a son of the gentleman who acted as chief mourner on the occasion: About seventy years ago, an old maiden lady died in Strathspey. Just previous to her death, she sent for her grand-nephew, and said to him, 'Willy, I'm deein', and as ye'll hae the charge *o' a' I have*, MIND that as much whisky is to be used at my funeral as there was at my baptism.' Willy neglected to ask the old lady what the quantity of whisky used at the baptism was, but when the day of the funeral arrived, believed her orders would be best fulfilled by allowing each guest to drink as much as he pleased. The churchyard where the body was to be deposited was about ten miles distant from where the death occurred. It was a short day in November, and when the funeral party came to the churchyard, the shades of night had considerably closed in. The grave-digger, whose patience had been exhausted in waiting, was not in the least willing to accept of Captain G——'s (the chief mourner) apology for delay. After looking about him he put the anxious question, 'But, Captain, whaur's Miss Ketty?' The reply was: 'In her coffin, to be sure, and get it into the earth as fast as you can.' There, however, was no coffin; the procession had sojourned at a country inn by the way—had rested the body on a dyke—started without it—and had to postpone the interment until next day. My correspondent very justly adds the remark, What would be thought of indulgence in drinking habits now that could lead to such a result?

There was a practice in many Scottish houses which acted most injuriously upon the national tendency to spirit drinking, and that was a foolish and inconsiderate custom of offering a glass on all occasions as a mark of kindness or hospitality. I mention the custom only for the purpose of offering a remonstrance. It should never be done. Even now, I am assured, small jobs (carpenter's or blacksmith's, or such like) are constantly remunerated in the West Highlands of Scotland—and

doubtless in many other parts of the country—not by a pecuniary payment, but by a *dram;* if the said dram be taken from a *speerit*-decanter out of the family press or cupboard, the compliment is esteemed the greater, and the offering doubly valued.

A very amusing dialogue between a landlord and his tenant on this unfortunate question of the dram. John Colquhoun, an aged Dumbartonshire tenant, is asked by the Laird of C. on Loch Lomond side, his landlord, to stay a minute till he *tastes*. 'Now, John,' says the Laird. 'Only half a glass, Camstraddale,' meekly pleads John. 'Which half?' rejoins the Laird; 'the upper or the lower?' John grins, and turns off *both*—the *upper* and *lower* too.

There is a most whimsical anecdote connected with the subject of drink, traditionary in the west of Scotland, regarding an old Gallowegian lady, disclaiming more drink, under the following circumstances: The old generation of Galloway lairds were a primitive and hospitable race, but their conviviality sometimes led to awkward occurrences. In former days, when roads were bad, and wheeled vehicles almost unknown, an old laird was returning from a supper-party, with his lady mounted behind him, on horseback. On crossing the river Urr, at a ford at a point where it joins the sea, the old lady dropped off, but was not missed till her husband reached his door, when, of course, there was an immediate search made. The party who were despatched in quest of her, arrived just in time to find her remonstrating with the advancing tide, which trickled into her mouth, in these words: 'No anither drap; neither het nor cauld.'

I would now introduce, as a perfect illustration of this portion of our subject, two descriptions of clergymen, well-known men in their day, which are taken from Dr Carlyle's work already referred to. Of Dr Alexander Webster, a clergyman, and one of his cotemporaries, he writes thus: 'Webster, leader of the high-flying

party, had justly obtained much respect amongst the clergy, and all ranks indeed, for having established the Widows' Fund. . . . His appearance of great strictness in religion, to which he was bred under his father, who was a very popular minister of the Tolbooth Church, not acting in restraint of his convivial humour, he was held to be excellent company even by those of dissolute manners. While being a five-bottle man, he could lay them all under the table. This had brought on him the nickname of Dr Bonum Magnum in the time of faction. But never being indecently the worse of liquor, and a love of claret, to any degree, not being reckoned in those days a sin in Scotland, all his excesses were pardoned.'

Dr Patrick Cumming also, a clergyman, and a co-temporary, he describes in the following terms: 'Dr Patrick Cumming was, at this time, 1751, at the head of the moderate interest, and had his temper been equal to his talents, might have kept it long, for he had both learning and sagacity, and very agreeable conversation, *with a constitution able to bear the conviviality of the times.*'

Now, of all the anecdotes and facts which I have collected, or of all which I have ever heard to illustrate the state of Scottish society in the past times, as regards its habits of intemperance, this assuredly surpasses them all. Of two well-known, distinguished, and leading clergymen in the middle of the eighteenth century, one who had 'obtained much respect' and 'had the appearance of great strictness in religion' is described as an enormous drinker of claret; the other, an able leader of a powerful section in the Church, is described as *owing* his influence to his power of meeting the conviviality of the times. Suppose for a moment a future biographer describing some of the leading Scottish clergymen of the present time. Suppose the following descriptions to occur in future memoirs: 'Dr William Muir was a man who took a leading part in all church

affairs at this time, and was much looked up to; he could always carry off without difficulty his five bottles of claret. Dr Thomas Guthrie had great influence in society and the General Assembly, as he could take his place in all companies, and drink on fair terms at the most convivial tables!!' Why, this seems to us so monstrous, that we can scarcely believe Dr Carlyle's account of matters in his day to be possible.

There is a story which illustrates, with terrible force, the power which drinking had obtained in Scottish social life. I have been deterred from bringing it forward, as too shocking for production. But as the story is pretty well known, and its truth vouched for on high authority, I venture to give it, as affording a proof that, in those days, no consideration, not even the most awful that affects human nature, could be made to outweigh the claims of a determined conviviality. It may, I think, be mentioned also, in the way of warning men generally against the hardening and demoralizing effects of habitual drunkenness. The story is this: At a prolonged drinking bout, one of the party remarked 'What gars the laird of Garskadden luk sae gash.'[1] 'Ou,' says his neighbour, the laird of Kilmardinny, 'Garskadden's been wi' his Maker these twa hours; I saw him step awa, but I didna like to disturb gude company!'[2]

Before closing this subject of excess in *drinking*, I may refer to another indulgence in which our countrymen are generally supposed to partake more largely than their neighbours. I mean snuff-taking. The popular southern ideas of a Scotchman and his snuff-box are inseparable. Smoking does not appear to have been practised more in Scotland than in England, and if Scotchmen are sometimes intemperate in the use of snuff it is certainly a more innocent excess than intem-

[1] Ghastly.

[2] The scene is described and place mentioned in Dr Strang's account of Glasgow Clubs, p. 104, 2nd edit.

perance in whisky. I recollect, amongst the common people in the north, a mode of taking snuff which showed a determination to make the *most* of it, and which indicated somewhat of intemperance in the enjoyment; this was to receive it, not through a pinch between the fingers, but through a quill or little bone ladle, which forced it up the nose. But besides smoking and snuffing, I have a reminiscence of a *third* use of tobacco, which I apprehend is now quite obsolete. Some of my readers will be surprised when I name this forgotten luxury. It was called *plugging*, and consisted (*horresco referens*) in poking a piece of pigtail tobacco right into the nostril. I remember this distinctly, and now, at a distance of sixty years, I recall my utter astonishment as a boy, at seeing my grand-uncle, with whom I lived in early days, put a thin piece of tobacco fairly up his nose. I suppose the plug acted as a continued stimulant on the olefactory nerve, and was, in short, like taking a perpetual pinch of snuff.

The inveterate snuff-taker, like the dram drinker, felt severely the being deprived of his accustomed stimulant, as in the following instance:—A severe snow-storm in the Highlands, which lasted for several weeks, having stopped all communication betwixt neighbouring hamlets, snuff-takers were reduced to their last pinch. Borrowing and begging from all the neighbours within reach was resorted to, but this soon failed, and all were alike reduced to the extremity which unwillingly-abstinent snuffers alone know. The minister of the parish was amongst the unhappy number; the craving was so intense, that study was out of the question. As a last resort, the beadle was despatched, through the snow, to a neighbouring glen in the hope of getting a supply; but he came back as unsuccessful as he went. 'What's to be dune, John?' was the minister's pathetic inquiry. John shook his head, as much as to say, that he could not tell; but immediately thereafter started up, as if a new idea had occurred to him. He came back in a

few minutes, crying, 'Hae.' The minister, too eager to be scrutinizing, took a long, deep pinch, and then said, 'Whaur did you get it?' 'I soupit[1] the poupit' was John's expressive reply. The minister's accumulated superfluous Sabbath snuff now came into good use.

[1] Swept.

APTER III

ON THE OLD SCOTTISH DOMESTIC SERVANT

On the third division of our subject, the old Scottish Domestic Servant, I have not much to add. I suppose the race is nearly extinct. We could hardly believe it *possible* now for a coachman to make the reply to his mistress which is recorded at page 31, or the still stronger assertion of his official position by one who met an order to quit his master's service by the cool reply, 'Na, na; I'm no gangin'. If ye dinna ken whan ye've a gude servant, I ken whan I've a gude place.'

It has been suggested by my esteemed friend, Dr W. Lindsay Alexander, that Scottish anecdotes deal too exclusively with the shrewd, quaint, and pawky humour of our countrymen, and have not sufficiently illustrated the deep pathos and strong loving-kindness of the 'kindly Scot'—qualities which, however little appreciated across the border, abound in Scottish poetry and Scottish life. For example, to take the case before us of these old retainers, although snappy and disagreeable to the last degree in their replies, and often most provoking in their ways, they were yet deeply and sincerely attached to the family where they had so long been domesticated; and the servant who would reply to her mistress' order to mend the fire by the short answer 'the fire's weel aneuch' would at the same time evince much interest in all that might assist her in sustaining the credit of her domestic economy, as, for example, whispering in her ear at dinner, 'Press the jeelies; they winna keep;' and had the hour of real trial and of difficulty come to the family, would have gone to the death for them, and

shared their greatest privations. Dr Alexander gives a very interesting example of kindness and affectionate attachment in an old Scottish domestic of his own family, whose quaint and odd familiarity was charming. I give it in his own words: 'When I was a child, there was an old servant at Pinkieburn, where my early days were spent, who had been all her life, I may say, in the house, for she came to it a child, and lived without ever leaving it, till she died in it, seventy-five years of age. Her feeling to her old master, who was just two years younger than herself, was a curious compound of the deference of a servant, and the familiarity and affection of a sister. She had known him as boy, lad, man, and old man, and she seemed to have a sort of notion, that without her he must be a very helpless being indeed. "I aye keepit the house for him, whether he was hame or awa," was a frequent utterance of hers; and she never seemed to think the intrusion even of his own nieces, who latterly lived with him, at all legitimate. When on her death-bed, he hobbled to her room with difficulty, having just got over a severe attack of gout, to bid her farewell. I chanced to be present, but was too young to remember what passed, except one thing, which probably was rather recalled to me afterwards, than properly recollected by me. It was her last request. "Laird," said she (for so she always called him, though his lairdship was of the smallest), "will ye tell them to bury me whaur I'll lie across at your feet?" I have always thought this characteristic of the old Scotch servant, and as such I send it to you.'

And here I would introduce another story which struck me very forcibly as illustrating the union of the qualities referred to by Dr Alexander. In the following narrative, how deep and tender a feeling is expressed in a brief dry sentence! I give Mr Scott's language:[1] 'My brother and I were, during our High School vacation, some forty years ago, very much indebted to the kind-

[1] Rev. R. Scott of Cranwell.

ness of a clever young carpenter employed in the machinery workshop of New Lanark Mills, near to which we were residing during our six weeks' holidays. It was he—Samuel Shaw, our dear companion—who first taught us to saw, and to plane, and to turn, too; and who made us the bows and arrows in which we so much delighted. The vacation over, and our hearts very sore, but bound to Samuel Shaw for ever, our mother sought to place some *pecuniary* recompense in his hand at parting, for all the great kindness he had shown her boys. Samuel looked in her face, and gently moving her hand aside, with an affectionate look cast upon us, who were by, exclaimed, in a tone which had sorrow in it: "Noo, Mrs Scott, ye hae spoilt a'." ' After such an appeal, it may be supposed no recompense, in silver or in gold, remained with Samuel Shaw.

On the subject of the old Scottish domestic, I have to acknowledge a kind communication from Lord Kinloch, which I give in his Lordship's words: 'My father had been in the counting-house of the well-known David Dale, the founder of the Lanark Mills, and eminent for his benevolence. Mr Dale, who it would appear was a short stout man, had a person in his employment named Matthew, who was permitted that familiarity with his master which was so characteristic of the former generation. One winter day, Mr Dale came into the counting-house, and complained that he had fallen on the ice. Matthew, who saw that his master was not much hurt, grinned a sarcastic smile. "I fell all my length," said Mr Dale. "Nae great length, sir," said Matthew. "Indeed, Matthew, ye need not laugh," said Mr Dale; "I have hurt the sma' of my back." "I wunner whaur *that* is," said Matthew.' Indeed, specimens like Matthew of serving-men of the former time have latterly been fast going out, but I remember one or two specimens. Mrs Grant of Kilgraston, the sister of Lord Bannatyne and Lady M'Gregor Murray, had one named John in her house at Portobello. I remem-

ber how my modern ideas were offended by John's familiarity when waiting at table. 'Some more wine, John,' said his mistress. 'There's some i' the bottle, mem,' said John. A little after, 'Mend the fire, John.' 'The fire's weel aneuch, mem,' replied the impracticable John. Another 'John' of my acquaintance was in the family of Mrs Campbell of Ardnave, mother of the Princess Polignac and the Honourable Mrs Archibald Macdonald. A young lady visiting in the family asked John at dinner for a potato. John made no response. The request was repeated; when John, putting his mouth to her ear, said, very audibly: 'There's jist twa in the dish, and they maun be keepit for the strangers.'

The following was sent me by a kind correspondent —a learned Professor in India—as a sample of *squabbling* between Scottish servants. A mistress observing something peculiar in her maid's manner, addressed her: 'Dear me, Tibbie, what are you so snappish about, that you go knocking the things as you dust them?' 'Ou, mem, it's Jock.' 'Well; what has Jock been doing?' 'Ou (with an indescribable, but easily imaginable toss of the head), he was angry at me, an' misca'd me, an' I said I was juist as the Lord had made me, an'——.' 'Well, Tibbie?' 'An' he said the Lord could hae had little to do whan he made me.' The idea of Tibbie being the work of an idle moment was one the deliciousness of which was not likely to be relished by Tibbie.

There have been some very amusing instances given of the matter-of-fact obedience paid to orders by Highland retainers when made to perform the ordinary duties of domestic servants, as when Mr Campbell, a Highland gentleman, visiting in a country house, and telling Donald to bring everything out of the bed-room, found all its movable articles, fender, fire-irons, etc., piled up in the lobby; so literal was the poor man's sense of obedience to orders! And of this, he gave a still more extraordinary proof during his sojourn in Edinburgh, by a very ludicrous exploit. When the family moved

into a house there, Mrs Campbell gave him very particular instructions regarding visitors, explaining, that they were to be shown into the drawing-room, and no doubt used the scotticism '*Carry* any ladies that call upstairs.' On the arrival of the first visitors, Donald was eager to show his strict attention to the mistress' orders. Two ladies came together, and Donald, seizing one in his arms, said to the other: 'Bide ye there till I come for ye,' and, in spite of her struggles and remonstrances, ushered the terrified visitor into Mrs Campbell's presence in this unwonted fashion.

Another case of *literal* obedience to orders produced a somewhat startling form of message. A servant of an old maiden lady, a patient of Dr Poole, formerly of Edinburgh, was under orders to go to the doctor every morning to report the state of her health, how she had slept, etc., with strict injunctions *always* to add 'with her compliments.' At length, one morning the girl brought this extraordinary message: 'Miss S——'s compliments, and she de'ed last night at aicht o'clock!'

I recollect, in Montrose (that fruitful field for old Scottish stories!), a most naïve reply from an honest lass, servant to old Mrs *Captain* Fullerton. A party of gentlemen had dined with her, and they had a turkey for dinner. Mrs F. proposed that one of the legs should be *deviled*, and the gentlemen have it served up as a relish for their wine. Accordingly, one of the company skilled in the mystery prepared it with pepper, cayenne, mustard, ketchup, etc. He gave it to Lizzy, and told her to take it down to the kitchen, supposing, as a matter of course, she would know that it was to be broiled, and brought back in due time. But in a little while, when it was rung for, Lizzy very innocently replied, that she had ate it up. As it was sent back to the kitchen, her only idea was that it must be for herself. But on surprise being expressed that she had eaten what was so highly peppered and seasoned, she very quaintly answered, 'Ou, I liket it a' the better.'

A well-known servant of the old school was John, the servant of Pitfour, Mr Ferguson, M.P., himself a most eccentric character, long father of the House of Commons, and a great friend of Pitt. John used to entertain the tenants on Pitfour's brief visits to his estate with numerous anecdotes of his master and Mr Pitt; but he always prefaced them with something in the style of Cardinal Wolsey's *Ego et rex meus*, with 'Me and Pitt, and Pitfour,' went somewhere, or performed some exploit. The famous Duchess of Gordon once wrote a note to John (the name of this eccentric valet), and said, 'John, put Pitfour into the carriage on Tuesday, and bring him up to Gordon Castle to dinner.' After sufficiently scratching his head, and considering what he should do, he showed the letter to Pitfour, who smiled, and said dryly, 'Well, John, I suppose we must go.'

An old domestic of this class gave a capital reason to his *young* master for his being allowed to do as he liked: 'Ye needna find faut wi' me, Maister Jeems, *I hae been langer about the place than yersel.*'

CHAPTER IV

ON HUMOUR PROCEEDING FROM SCOTTISH LANGUAGE, INCLUDING SCOTTISH PROVERBS

WE have now to enter upon the portion of our subject which in the *Reminiscences* has been named 'Humour proceeding from Scottish Language, including Scottish Proverbs.' I am quite aware that the difference between the anecdotes belonging to this division and to the division termed 'Wit and Humour' is very indistinct, and must, in fact, in many cases, be quite arbitrary. Much of what we enjoy most in Scottish stories is not on account of any real wit or humour in the speaker, but, it may be, from the odd and unexpected view which is taken, or from the quaint and original turn of the expression made use of, or from the simple and matter-of-fact reference made to circumstances which are new to them. I shall not, therefore, be careful to preserve any strict line of separation between this division and the next. Each is conversant with what is amusing and with what is Scotch. What we have now chiefly to illustrate by suitable anecdotes is peculiarities of Scottish language—its various humorous turns and odd expressions.

We commence, therefore, with stories where words and expressions which are peculiarly Scotch impart the humour and the point. Sometimes they are altogether untranslatable into another language. As for example, a parishioner in an Ayrshire village meeting his pastor, who had just returned after a considerable absencé on account of ill health, congratulated him on his convalescence, and added, anticipatory of the pleasure he

would have in hearing him again: 'I'm unco yuckie to hear a blaud o' yer gab.' This is an untranslatable form of saying how glad he should be to hear his minister's voice again speaking to him the words of salvation and of peace from the pulpit.

The two following are good examples of that Scottish style of expression which has its own character. They are kindly sent by Sir Archibald Dunbar. The first illustrates Scottish acute discernment. A certain titled lady is known around our country town for her long-continued and extensive charities, which are not withheld from those who least deserve them. A few years since, by the unexpected death of her brother and of his only son, she became possessor of a fine estate. The news soon spread in the neighbourhood, and a group of old women were overheard in the street of Elgin discussing the fact. One of them said, 'Ay, she may prosper, for she has baith the prayers of the good and of the bad.'

The second anecdote is a delightful illustration of Mrs Hamilton's *Cottagers of Glenburnie,* and of the old-fashioned Scottish pride in the midden. About twenty years ago, under the apprehension of cholera, committees of the most influential inhabitants of the county of Moray were formed to enforce a more complete cleansing of our towns and villages, and to induce the cottagers to remove their dunghills or dung-pits from too close a proximity to their doors or windows. One determined woman, on the outskirts of the town of Forres, I suppose with her future potato crop in view, met our M.P., who headed one of these committees, thus: 'Noo, Major, you may tak our lives, but ye'll no tak our midden.'

The equivoke of the Edinburgh Provost telling the House of Lords, in his evidence, of guns fitted for shooting deuks and sic like fools, supplied the material for a poor woman's honest compliment to a benevolent Scottish nobleman. John, Duke of Roxburghe, was one day

out riding, and at the gate of Floors he was accosted by an importunate old beggar woman. He gave her half-a-crown, which pleased her so much that she exclaimed: 'God bless your *guse*-like face, for a Deuk's no gude aneuch for ye.'

There is something quite inimitable in the matter-of-factness of the following story of an advertisement, which may tend to illustrate the Antiquary's remark to Mrs M'Candlish, anent the starting of the coach or fly to Queensferry. A carrier, who plied his trade between Aberdeen and a village considerably to the north of it, was asked by one of the villagers 'Fan are ye gaun to the town' (Aberdeen)? To which he replied 'I'll be in on Monanday, God willin' an' weather permittin', an' on Tiseday, *fither or no*.'

There could not be a better anecdote to accompany the story of the young man that was 'a' sound' than the following, supplied by a kind lady correspondent. Towards the end of the last century, an ancestor of mine, the Rev. Mr B——, minister of the parish of Abercorn, on a Sunday, when he had occasion to be absent, confided his pulpit to a young probationer, who fired off one of those flash sermons we have all listened to, missing every aim but the only too evident one of ministering to the vanity of the speaker. Strutting out in the evening with one of the young ladies of the family, the flush and elation of his morning's performance still unsubsided, and chancing to pass a cottage from whence proceeded the sounds of evening devotion, he eagerly drew near to listen. 'It would be so curious,' he said, 'to hear what these simple uneducated people had to say.' A voice tremulous with age was pouring forth one of those fervent prayers, so frequently to be heard among our pious peasantry, one which might have been uttered by some David Deans on the hill-side. Somewhat solemnized, and in evident wonder, the young preacher listened attentively, till, from general supplication, the old man came to particulars, and besought

God to have mercy on 'the poor parish of Abercorn, for they had been fed out o' a toom spoon that day.' The young man shrunk away, having heard rather too much of what such people say.

Amongst many of the sayings by Mr Shirra, page 112, I have the following from a kind correspondent, with assurance of its being genuine: 'Mr Shirra having, on a certain occasion, felt somewhat indisposed towards the end of the week, resolved to avail himself of the services of a young probationer for both diets of worship on the ensuing Sunday. This young man gave promise of becoming a fair preacher, but affected great refinement in style and delivery. Mr Shirra attended the forenoon service, which was conducted pretty much to his satisfaction, except in one particular. In the prayer after sermon, the preacher put up, as usual, a petition for a blessing on Mr Shirra and his ministry, but, in doing so, was unlucky enough to make some rather pointed allusions to Mr Shirra's habit of plain speaking, and peculiarities in manner. This fired the worthy divine, who resolved at once to be "upsides" with the finical gentleman. He accordingly intimated to the preacher, that he felt himself well enough to undertake the afternoon duty, and would therefore officiate. He did so; and thus obtained an opportunity of giving a Roland for an Oliver. The young preacher, who was present in Mr Shirra's pew, was prayed for as a promising labourer in the vineyard, but withal, as much in need of a thorough handling in regard to style and manner, the *modus operandi* in reference to which being suggested in the following petition, delivered with great fervour: "But oh, please tak a brog,[1] and prod him weel, and let the wind out o' him."'

The Rev. Dr Cook of Haddington supplies an excellent anecdote, of which the point is in the dry Scottish answer: An old lady of the Doctor's acquaintance, about seventy, sent for her medical attendant to consult

[1] An awl or sharp-pointed instrument.

him about a sore throat, which had troubled her for some days. Her medical man was ushered into her room, decked out with the now-prevailing fashion, a moustache and flowing beard. The old lady, after exchanging the usual civilities, described her complaint to the worthy son of Æsculapius. 'Well,' says he, 'do you know, Mrs Macfarlane, I used to be much troubled with the very same kind of sore throat, but ever since I allowed my moustache and beard to grow, I have never been troubled with it.' 'A-weel, a-weel,' said the old lady drily, 'that may be the case, but ye maun prescribe some other method for me to get quit o' the sair throat; for ye ken, doctor, I canna adopt *that* cure.'

But how exquisite the answer of old Mrs Robison (widow of the eminent professor of natural philosophy) to a gentleman whom she had invited to dinner on a particular day—he had accepted, with the reservation, 'If I am spared'—'Weel, weel,' said Mrs Robison, 'if ye're dead, I'll no expect ye.'

How pithy and how wise, and also how Scotch is the following.

A young lady, pressed by friends to marry a decent but poor man, on the plea 'Marry for love, and work for siller,' replied 'It's a' vera true, but a kiss and a tinniefu[1] o' cauld water maks a gey wersh[2] breakfast.'

Could there be a happier metaphor for the occasion than this: An old lady in Banffshire, hearing a minister of the Established Church preach, who hesitated much in the delivery of his pulpit discourses, remarked to a friend afterwards, that his delivery was just like 'an ill rinning trackie,' meaning thereby, when tea does not run freely from one of the brown tea-pots so generally in use in the north of Scotland.

It is curious to contrast the expressions of English or Irish people with those uttered by Scotch people under similar circumstances. For example: Alongside of the anecdotes of the Scotch servants, 'Cry a' thegither'

[1] Tinnie, the small porringer of children. [2] Insipid.

(at page 36), I would place, though it be inferior, that of an Irish Roscommon 'Tay-boy,' who, in the course of his waiting at the tea-table, when subjected to too many calls upon his attendance by the *Leedies* present, at last, losing patience entirely, exclaimed in despair: 'Och, and ye bother me.'

The two following derive their force entirely from the Scottish turn of the expressions. Translated into English, they would lose all point—at least, much of the point which they now have:

At the sale of an antiquarian gentleman's effects in Roxburghshire, which Sir Walter Scott happened to attend, there was one little article, a Roman *patina*, which occasioned a good deal of competition, and was eventually knocked down to the distinguished baronet at a high price. Sir Walter was excessively amused, during the time of bidding, to observe how much it excited the astonishment of an old woman, who had evidently come there to buy culinary utensils on a more economical principle. 'If the parritch-pan,' she at last burst out—'if the parritch-pan gangs at that, what will the kail-pat gang for?'

An ancestor of Sir Walter Scott joined the Pretender, and, with his brother, was engaged in that unfortunate adventure which ended in a skirmish and captivity at Preston, 1715. It was the fashion of those times for all persons of the rank of gentlemen to wear scarlet waistcoats. A ball had struck one of the brothers, and and carried part of this dress into his body, and in this condition he was taken prisoner with a number of his companions, and stript, as was too often the practice in those remorseless wars. Thus wounded, and nearly naked, having only a shirt on, and an old sack, about them, the ancestor of the great Poet was sitting, along with his brother and a hundred and fifty unfortunate gentlemen, in a granary at Preston. The wounded man fell sick, as the story goes, and vomited the scarlet cloth which the ball had passed into the wound. 'O

man, Wattie,' cried his brother, 'if you have a wardrobe in your wame, I wish you would vomit me a pair o' breeks, for I have muckle need o' them.'

There is an anecdote told of the late Dr Barclay, the eminent physician, which is inimitable for its *pawkiness*. Dr Barclay originally studied for the church, and was indeed licensed as a preacher. His discourses took the peculiar impress of his mind. The mother of my informant once heard him preach in the Kirk of Muthill, his native parish. His subject was the character of Absalom, and, after dwelling on the enormity of his parricidal rebellion against his father, he concluded, 'But let us draw a veil over a character marked by so many crimes—yet did the virgins of Israel lament him, for he was comely in person!'

An amusing example of quaint Scottish language being employed in a private journal. Many years ago, when the minister of a neighbouring parish died, a committee of the presbytery was appointed, probably with the approbation of his relatives, to examine his papers, and destroy what were deemed useless. It is narrated that one of the entries in the reverend gentleman's journal was as follows: 'Eat crappit heads[1] for supper last night, and was the *waur* o't; see when I'll do the like o' that again.'

I have, at page 62, mentioned Lord Polkemmet, as affording specimens of strong original Scotch. We are furnished with another specimen. Our informant heard the following anecdote of him from the late Lord Mackenzie, on one of those delightful Circuit expeditions, when Lord Mackenzie was accustomed to pour out of his well-stored and ingenious mind an inexhaustible flow of humour and anecdote.

The late James Fergusson, Clerk of Session, a most genial and amiable man, of whose periodical fits of absence most edifying stories are still repeated by his

[1] A compound made of oatmeal, suet, onions, and pepper, with which the heads of haddocks are stuffed.

friends, was an excellent and eloquent speaker, but, in truth, there was often more sound than matter in his orations. He had a habit of lending emphasis to his arguments, by violently beating with his clenched hand the bar before which he pleaded. Once when stating a case to Lord Polkemmet, with great energy of action, his lordship interposed, and exclaimed, 'Maister Jemmy, dinna dunt; ye think ye're duntin't into me, and ye're just duntin't out o' me.'

Harry Erskine, the witty and accomplished Dean of Faculty, in one of his luminous addresses from the bar illustrated his argument by a humorous story, which excited the risible faculties of the whole *feifteen*, save one, viz. Lord Polkemmet, who made no remark, and was observed to be graver than before. The Court adjourned till next day, when a fresh case was taken up. The Dean was stating it, when all at once, to the astonishment of the audience, Lord Polkemmet exclaimed 'Oh, Hairy, man; Hairy, man, I hae ye noo: I hae ye noo.' He had been pondering over the Dean's joke for twenty-four hours, and it had at last dawned on his sluggish mind. He had probably let it wamble in his wame along with his interlocutor and his toddy.

In the *Reminiscences* are several anecdotes of lairds, drunk and sober, with their sayings. I may mention, in further illustration of the habits and character of our landed proprietors, that some of these old lairds were remarkable for their taciturnity. A former laird of Brotherton was of this description, and was on all occasions a man of few words. He had a favourite tame goose, and for hours together Brotherton and his silent companion sat by the fireside opposite to each other. On one occasion a candidate for the representation of the county in Parliament called upon him to solicit his vote, and urged his request with much eloquence and voluble discourse; to all which the laird replied only by nods and smiles, without saying a word. When, however, the candidate was gone, he looked across to his

goose, and emphatically remarked 'I'm thinkin' yon windy chiel 'll no tell muckle that you and I said till him.'

As another instance of laconic jocund speaking, take the following: Old Pringle of Torwoodlee, on some occasion, had a dinner given in his honour, after which was to be presented to him a silver cup. The gentleman fixed on to make an appropriate speech and present the cup, got up, and pushing it across the table towards him, said, 'Torwoodlee, ther's your jug.' Torwoodlee rose and responded, 'Gentlemen, I thenk ye for the mug,' and sat down again, satisfied with his eloquence.

I have noticed as a prevalent feeling in Scotchmen advanced in life being particularly jealous of assistance from younger persons. I recollect the Hon. General Gordon of Fyvie, when near ninety, drawing away, with great indignation, at any one helping him into his carriage, putting on his greatcoat, etc. A correspondent notices a similar instance. Our old *Iron Duke*, it was said, could not bear to be assisted, even in his latest years, by the arm or the hand of any one. Of a piece with this feeling of the aged soldier was the rebuke which an old octogenarian clergyman in the west of Scotland administered to his granddaughter, offering herself as his guide and support. I introduce the anecdote for the exquisite application of the Scotch word expressing her officious attention. When, tottering from age and feebleness, he went forth to take one of his last walks, 'What!' he testily exclaimed, 'are ye comin' after me? I don't like, I tell you, to be so *herded!!*'

We have frequent reference in Scottish anecdotes to the vast importance which civic dignitaries of towns attach to their municipal office. The wife of the Provost of Aberdeen, when in London, was unwilling to appear in public lest her presence should 'creat a confeesion.' (See page 61.) A denizen of the good city of St Andrews, long desirous of being elected deacon of his craft, after many years of scheming and bowing, at last attained

the acme of his ambition, and while the oaths of office were being administered to him, a number of waggish friends waited outside to 'trot him out,' but the sequel convinced them this was unnecessary. On emerging from the City Hall, with thumbs stuck in the armlets of his vest, with head erect, and solemn step, he approached his friends, lifting up his voice and saying, 'Now, billies, supposing I'm a deacon, mind I can be spoken to at ony time.'

A very good sample of the odd and original betheral is preserved in the traditions of Dunfermline, a very characteristic saying of whom has been communicated by a kind correspondent from that ancient burgh town. Sandy M'Lauchlan discharged the duties of betheral, kirk-officer, and bellman. He was a little man, with sharp brown eyes and a mouth expressive of fun. One day the minister, Mr Johnstone, was on his way down from the manse to the High Street, after breakfast, as was his wont, to get his letters at the post-office, and see the only newspaper which then came to enlighten the inhabitants with news of public and foreign affairs. Observing Sandy slinking along the opposite side of the cross, as if to avoid a meeting, Mr Johnstone called out in his fine sonorous voice, 'Saunders, I wish to speak to you.' With some reluctance Sandy came slowly forward, lifting his bonnet and pulling his forelock. After giving Sandy certain directions about kirk matters, the minister sniffed once or twice, and remarked, 'Saunders, I fear you have been "tasting" (taking a glass) this morning.' 'Deed, sir,' replied Sandy, with the coolest effrontery, set off with a droll glance of his brown eyes, 'deed, sir, I was just ga'in' to observe I thocht there was a smell o' speerits *amang us* this mornin'!'

The *conceit* of betherals has been often reverted to (see page 106), but I think the richest specimen of such conceit is the following: A functionary of the genuine Scottish type in the west used to say, when inquired after by his friends: 'Weel, I am just in the pulpit

ilka Sabbath as usual.' On some one inquiring of him if he could recommend anybody to the sexton's office in a neighbouring church, 'What's your wull?' says James. 'Do you know a decent man we could get for a beadle?' 'Na, na; if it were a minister or an elder body, I could name plenty, but to get a man for such an office as that I canna pretend.'

I have already spoken of the inveterate tendency in Scotch people to mark position by reference to points of the compass. (See at page 42.) To the Rev. R. A. Scott, vicar of Cranwell, I am indebted (as for other favours) for a very humorous illustration of the same object. At a billiard-room in Stirling (an unlikely place to find such a source of recreation some forty years ago), one of the yeomanry cavalry then in the town, a half-Highland private in the corps from the shores of Loch of Menteith, was heard instructing a comrade, whom he was indoctrinating in the science of the ivory balls, to 'streik the red ba' on the north-wast side, and ye would pockat it.'

I have spoken at page 60 of dialects, and of the difference of the Aberdeen when contrasted with Forfar dialect. But how much greater must be that difference when contrasted with the *ore rotundo* language of an English southern dignitary. Such a one being present at a school examination in Aberdeen wished to put some questions on Scripture history himself, and asked an intelligent boy, 'What was the ultimate fate of Pharaoh?' This the boy not understanding, the master put the same question Aberdonicé: ''Jemmy, fat was the hinner end o' Pharaoh,' which called forth the ready reply, 'He was drouned i' the Red Sea.'

The following may be added to the list of Scottish expressions derived from French language. I have a distinct recollection of hearing, when a child, more than sixty years ago, the dairymaids at Fasque calling to the cow, 'Prutchee, mou; prutchee, madame.' This invocation, it seems, is common in Nithsdale, and is

simply a corruption of the French 'Approchez moi; approchez, madame' ('Come near me; come, my lady'). Again, the large clasp-knife, common a century ago, such as sailors use, or larger, was in my remembrance called a Jockteleg. It derived this name from its maker, as they were all made by *Jaques* de Liège.

In connection with this division of our subject, the present seems to be a proper place for introducing the mention of a Scottish peculiarity, viz. that of naming individuals from lands which have been possessed long by the family, or frequently from the landed estates which they acquire. The use of this mode of discriminating individuals in the Highland districts is sufficiently obvious. Where the inhabitants of a whole country side are Campbells, or Frasers, or Gordons, nothing could be more convenient than addressing the individuals of each clan by the name of his estate. Indeed, some years ago, any other designation, as Mr Campbell, Mr Fraser, would have been resented as an indignity. Their consequence sprung from their possession.[1] But all this is fast wearing away. The estates of old families have often changed hands, and Highlanders are most unwilling to give the names of old properties to new proprietors. The custom, however, lingers amongst us, in the northern districts especially. Farms also used to give their names to the tenants.[2] I can recall an amusing instance of this practice belonging to my early days. The oldest recollections I have are connected with the name, the figure, the sayings and doings, of the old cowherd at Fasque in my father's time; his name was Boggy, i.e. his ordinary appellation; his true name was Sandy Anderson. But he was called Boggy from the circumstance of having once held a wretched

[1] Even in Forfarshire, where Carnegies abound, we had Craigo, Balnamoon, Pittarrow, etc.

[2] This custom is still in use in Galloway, and 'Challoch,' Eschonchan, 'Tonderghie,' Balsalloch, and Drummorral, etc., etc., appear regularly at kirk and market.

farm on Deeside named Boggendreep. He had long left it, and been unfortunate in it, but the name never left him—he was Boggy to his grave. The territorial appellation used to be reckoned complimentary, and more respectful than Mr or any higher title to which the individual might be entitled. I recollect, in my brother's time, at Fasque, his shewing off some of his home stock to Mr Williamson, the great Aberdeen butcher. They came to a fine stot, and Sir Alexander said, with some appearance of boast: 'I was offered twenty guineas for that ox.' 'Indeed, Fasque,' said Williamson, 'ye shuld hae steekit your neive upo' that.'

Sir Walter Scott had marked in his diary a territorial greeting of two proprietors which had amused him much. The laird of Kilspindie had met the laird of Tannachy-Tulloch, and the following compliments passed between them: 'Ye're maist obedient hummil servant, Tannachy-Tulloch.' To which the reply was, 'Your nain man, Kilspindie.'

In proportion as we advance towards the Highland districts this custom of distinguishing clans or races, and marking them out according to the district they occupied, became more apparent. There was the Glengary country, the Fraser country, the Gordon country, etc., etc. These names carried also with them certain moral features as characteristic of each division. Hence the following anecdote: The morning litany of an old laird of Cultoquhay, when he took his morning draught at the cauld well, was in these terms: 'Frae the ire o' the Drummonds, the pride o' the Græmes, the greed o' the Campbells, and the wind o' the Murrays, guid Lord deliver us.' On being reproved by the Duke of Athol for taking such liberties with noble names, his answer was: 'There, my lord, there's the wind o' the Murrays!'

Proverbs

Under this head of language and dialect I have devoted a considerable space in the *Reminiscences* to our Scottish

proverbs and proverbial expressions. I felt much disposed to reopen the question, and from Fergusson and others to bring forward another series of these interesting and popular abstracts of humour and philosophy, but the attempt would occupy more time and attention than I can give at present. I would rather now recall some sententious or proverbial modes of expression which I recollect commonly used in society amongst a generation now nearly all passed away; and in this recollection let me here acknowledge the valuable assistance I have received from a communication on the subject from a true-hearted Scotsman, Mr T. Stephen,[1] who will recognize his own language in describing those old forms of Scottish proverbial expressions. Take the following examples:

'Corbies winna pike out corbies 'een' implies that persons of the same profession, or interested in the same objects, will not act to each other's disadvantage.

'Like a hen on a het girdle' is an expressive figure for describing the fidgety and eccentric gyrations of a tiresome person under excitement.

When anything disappears in a silent imperceptible manner, applied often to the gradual decline of human life, or the secret wasteful expenditure of a fortune, how expressive that very Scottish simile for its passing for ever 'like snaw aff a dike.'

When a person does anything that is contrary to his habits or disposition, it is common in Aberdeenshire to say, 'I wish the bodie be na fey;' that is, that this unwonted act may not be a prelude to his death.

In that same county, it is a common saying to accept cold liquor with an intimation that 'It's a cauld heart that canna warm its ain drink;' and to say, at any clever hit or repartee, 'That's het.'

'Ill-fa'ard,' or 'weel-fa'ard,' means an ill, or well, favoured or looking person.

[1] Author of *History of the Church of Scotland*, 4 vols., and other excellent works.

'Hirsle yont' means go farther on.

'No that gleg i' the uptack' means not absolute deafness, but not hearing quite distinctly; and is indeed often applied to the understanding also.

A common question in Aberdeen is 'Fa fuppit the lawdy?' varied sometimes by 'Fa skugget the lawdy?' that is, whipped or flogged the boy, meaning, who was his early instructor.

To 'taigle' is to hinder or delay.

'To pit ower a bit prayer.'

'It is cannier to fleech (or flatter) a fool than to fecht him.'

Mr Stephen mentions a sly sententious expression of his father to imply his disbelief: 'If a' tales be true that's nae lee.' His account of his grandmother certainly entitles her to rank amongst our vigorous old Scottish ladies.

It is a common saying in Aberdeenshire, when one refuses to go anywhere or farther, 'Deil a length o' my tae;' and when my grandmother—a woman who brought a son into the world who is living in it yet, after she was *fifty-six* years of age—when she was determined not to do any thing that was urged upon her, 'I wonna be obstinate, but I wonna do't.'

It is said that in those days, when travelling was neither so easy nor so expeditious as it is at present, an Aberdeen bailie went to London on business, and remained there some weeks. On his return his friends congratulated him on his appearance of having lived well in his absence. His reply was an expression of surprise; for, said he, 'Deil a speen was i' ma mou' a' the time I was awa.' His meaning was, that he had had no broth or soup during his stay in London, only solid meat.

But that same bailie had been either a humorist, or had shot into the marvellous with a long bow. He exercised his ingenuity in describing his visit to the king [George III.]. He said he had been invited to

the palace to tea, and the queen requiring to fill up the tea-pot, the bailie rose to assist her Majesty, when the king interposed by saying, 'O never mind, bailie; Charlotte aye helps hersel to the kettle!'

Local circumstances often supply proverbial expressions which have a use and circulation almost exclusively provincial, as for example: There is a common phrase in Galloway, where there are a great many sharing in anything, and in consequence it is rapidly diminishing: 'It's like Cun and the haggis; it's gaan gear,' the origin of which I believe to be as follows: A farmer, noted for the penuriousness of his disposition, had employed a servant or two to assist him in his agricultural operations. The name of the farm was abbreviated into 'Cun,' and, according to the usage in that locality, the farmer himself acquired the same designation. One day a haggis had been prepared for dinner, and Cun, afraid that they would eat too much, cautioned the servants at the outset that they would need to eat sparingly, or the haggis would spoil their stomach. The dish was placed in the centre, and each provided with a spoon, they began to discuss its contents. After partaking of a little, Cun laid down his spoon as a reminder, but the others seemed to have forgot his admonition. As a last resource, he prepared to return thanks, thinking that that might be a sufficient hint, but to no purpose. At last, seizing up his spoon, he exclaimed, 'It's gaan gear, boys, I'll tak' a spunefu' yet,' and so ate on till the haggis disappeared. Expressions and words such as these used to be far more mixed up with general Scottish language than they are at present. I remember such quite common in society, especially with elderly persons. They are all now fast becoming obsolete, and will soon be heard only amongst the lower ranks.

Much has been said of the old Scottish ladies of the former generation. Their originality, their peculiar mental development, and social habits, are well described by Lord Cockburn in his memoirs. Indeed, the

portion allotted to them is perhaps the most striking and the most powerful of his book. He describes a phase of character now all but extinct. A renewed mention of them properly comes under this head, because no doubt the peculiarity of their character was closely allied with their peculiarity of *language*.

A great confusion existed in the mind of some of those old-fashioned ladies on the subject of modern inventions and usages. A Montrose old lady protested against the use of steam vessels, as counteracting the decrees of Providence in going against wind and tide, vehemently asserting, 'I would *hae* naething to say to thae impious vessels.' Another lady was equally discomposed by the introduction of gas, asking with much earnestness, 'What's to become o' the puir whales?' deeming their interests materially affected by this superseding of their oil. A lady of this class, who had long lived in country retirement, coming up to Edinburgh, was, after an absence of many years, going along Princes Street about the time when the water carts were introduced for preventing the dust, and seeing one of them passing, rushed from off the pavement to the driver, saying, 'Man, ye're *skailing* a' the water.' Such being her ignorance of modern improvements.

There is a point and originality in the expressions on common matters of the old Scottish ladies, unlike what one finds now; for example, a country minister had been invited, with his wife, to dine and spend the night at the house of one of his lairds. Their host was very proud of one of the very large beds which had just come into fashion, and in the morning asked the lady how she had slept in it. 'O vary well, sir; but, indeed, I thought I'd lost the minister a'thegither.'

Nothing, however, in my opinion comes up to the originality and point of the Montrose old maiden lady's most 'exquisite reason' for not subscribing to the proposed fund for organizing a volunteer corps in that town. It was at the time of expected invasion at the

beginning of the century, and some of the town magistrates called upon her and solicited her subscription to raise men for the service of the king: 'Indeed,' she answered right sturdily, 'I'll dae nae sic thing; I never could raise a man *for mysel*, and I'm no gaen to raise men for King George.'

Some curious stories are told of ladies of this class, as connected with the novelties and excitement of railway travelling. Missing their luggage, or finding that something has gone wrong about it, often causes very terrible distress, and might be amusing, were it not to the sufferer so severe a calamity. I was much entertained with the earnestness of this feeling, and the expression of it from an old Scotch lady, whose box was not forthcoming at the station where she was to stop. When urged to be patient, her indignant exclamation was, 'I can bear ony pairtings that may be ca'ed for in God's Providence; but I canna stan' pairting frae ma claes.'

The following anecdote from the west exhibits a curious confusion of ideas arising from the old-fashioned prejudice against Frenchmen and their language, which existed in the last generation. During the long French war, two old ladies in Stranraer were going to the kirk, the one said to the other, 'Was it no a wonderfu' thing that the Breetish were aye victorious ower the French in battle.' 'Not a bit,' said the other old lady; 'dinna ye ken the Breetish aye say their prayers before ga'in into battle?' The other replied, 'But canna the French say their prayers as weel?' The reply was most characteristic: 'Hoot! jabbering bodies, wha could *understan'* them?'

Of old ladies of this class, much has been said of Miss Johnstone, of whom the anecdote at p. 46 is recorded, and whom persons still alive remember. She was remarkable for the freedom of her expressions on religious subjects, and for her plain-spoken honesty, which scorned to express any sentiments she did not feel. Of this she gave a striking proof in her answer to her niece, Mrs

Wauchope of Niddrie. Poor Mrs Wauchope, when very ill, sent for 'Aunt Soph,' and said to her, 'Soph, I believe I am dying, will you always be kind to my children when I am gone?' 'Na, na; tak yer spoilt deevils wi' ye,' was the reply, 'for I'll hae naething ado wi' them.' Having introduced the mention of this lady, I would add some further particulars which have been recorded of her.

Of all the eccentric and original Scottish old ladies of whom any one of the present generation has any reminiscences, whether maids or matrons, I suppose none was more eccentric or more original than Miss Sophia Johnstone of Hilton, usually known to her cotemporaries by the name of Soph Johnstone. Her natural turn for oddity was heightened by her strange bringing up. Her father, Mr Johnstone of Hilton, for some strange whim in which he was seconded by Mrs Johnstone, gave her no education whatever. She is thus described by Lord Cockburn in the *Memorials of his Time:* 'Possessed of great natural vigour of mind, she passed her youth in utter rusticity; in the course of which, however, she made herself a good carpenter and a good smith, arts which she practised occasionally, even to the shoeing of a horse, I believe, till after the middle of her life. It was not till after she became a woman that she taught herself to read and write; and then she read incessantly. She must have been about *sixty* before I ever saw her, which was chiefly, and often, at Niddrie. Her dress was always the same—a man's hat when out of doors, and generally when within them, a cloth covering exactly like a man's great-coat, buttoned closely from the chin to the ground, worsted stockings, strong shoes with large brass clasps. And in this raiment she sat in any drawing-room, and at any table, amidst all the fashion and aristocracy of the land, respected and liked. For her dispositions were excellent, her talk intelligent and racy, rich, both in old anecdote and in shrewd modern observation, and spiced with a good deal of plain sar-

casm; her understanding powerful; all her opinions free, and very freely expressed; and neither loneliness, nor very slender means, ever brought sourness or melancholy to her face or her heart.'

Soph was grand-aunt to Mrs Spottiswoode of Spottiswoode, and many stories of their eccentric relative are traditionary in the family. I am afraid her strange way of bringing up was not favourable to her religious opinions. Lady Anne Barnard affirms that she lived and died an unbeliever. This is saying too much. She was (as in everything else) eccentric in her religious opinions, and much given to dispute with clergymen who undertook to reason with her. I could not properly record here some of her wildest theological statements, though with her, as with many others of her cotemporaries, it is difficult to form a fair judgment of their opinions from their mere expression, which must not be taken quite literally. There is no doubt truth, to a certain extent, in Lord Cockburn's apology for those originals, and we must estimate their characters accordingly.

'It is remarkable,' he writes, 'that, though all these female nestors were not merely decorous in matters of religion, but really pious, they would all have been deemed irreligious now. Gay-hearted, and utterly devoid of every tincture of fanaticism, the very freedom and cheerfulness of their conversation and views on sacred subjects would have excited the horror of those who give the tone on these matters at present. So various are the opinions of what constitutes religiousness.'

We have a further description of Soph Johnstone from the pen of Lady Anne Barnard, one of the Balcarres family. It is in Lord Lindsay's *Lives of the Lindsays*, vol. ii. page 318.

'I scarce think that any system of education could have made this woman one of the *fair* sex. Nature seemed to have entered into the jest, and hesitated to the last whether to make her a boy or a girl. Her taste led her to hunt with her brothers, to wrestle with the

stable boys, and to saw wood with the carpenter. She worked well in iron; could shoe a horse quicker than the smith; made excellent trunks; played well on the fiddle; sung a man's song in a bass voice, and was by many people suspected of being one. She learnt to write of the butler at her own request, and had a taste for reading, which she greatly improved. She was a droll ingenious fellow; her talents for mimicry made her enemies, and the violence of her attachments to those she called her favourites, secured her a few warm friends. She came to spend a few months with my mother soon after her marriage, and at the time I am speaking of, had been with her thirteen years, making Balcarres her headquarters, devoting herself to the youngest child, whichever it was, deserting him when he got into breeches and regularly constant to no one but me. She had a little forge fitted up in her closet to which I was very often invited.'

A relation of Soph Johnstone has sent me a curious account of a theological argument which she had held with the celebrated Dr Hugh Blair. The Doctor, shocked to find her mind in such an unsettled state on some fundamental points of theology, had dwelt at some length upon the great facts connected with the primæval condition and the fall. Soph heard it all with much gravity, and then coolly replied, 'Weel, weel, Doctor, it wud hae been sma' pleasure to me to rin about naked in a garden, eating green apples.'

Amongst all the old ladies in Scotland whom I have ever known, one of the most remarkable was Lady Clerk, widow of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik. She was a native of the north of England, but had been so long identified with Scotland and its social habits, that she may well be considered as one of our Scottish reminiscences. When I first came to reside in Edinburgh, 36 years ago, Mary Lady Clerk was known by every one as an original, whose sayings and doings were constantly quoted in society. She lived in Princes Street, and her

figure, as she used to walk about, was as familiar to many of the inhabitants as the steeple of St Giles. Lady Clerk was born in Newcastle in 1745. She was a baby in the cradle when Prince Charles Edward passed through that town. As her father, a Mr Dacre, was an adherent of the Jacobite cause, the Prince was entertained at Mr Dacre's house, and on leaving it, on his way south, he pinned, with his own hand, one of his favours on the child's cradle, which gave Lady Clerk through life a strong feeling in favour of the Stuart family. She kept the favour which had so early been attached to her bed with great care, and in 1822 presented it to the king (George IV.) on his visit to Scotland, and it was very kindly and graciously received by him. The late Lord Stowel (William Scott) was also a native of Newcastle, and in their boyish and girlish days, an attachment sprung up between Miss Dacre and himself. The entire want of means precluded for the time all hope of marriage. But some years afterwards, when Scott had entered upon that legal profession, of which he was destined to become so distinguished an ornament, and when he saw the probability of his success, he wrote to his first love a brief offer of his hand, beginning 'Dear Molly Dacre,' and signing himself 'Willie Scott.' Lady Clerk repeated to me her answer: 'Dear Willie Scott, I should have been glad to be your wife, but on Tuesday next I am to be married to Captain John Clerk, and am your affectionate Molly Dacre.' Lady Clerk kept up a constant intercourse with the two eminent brothers, John Scott the Chancellor, and William, the Judge of the Ecclesiastical and Admiralty Courts. She showed me once a highly characteristic letter from Lord Eldon. At the time of passing what was usually called the Catholic Relief Bill, Lady Clerk wrote to Lord Eldon congratulating him upon the energetic stand he had made to prevent the bill becoming law. His answer was laconic, and nearly thus: 'Dear Molly Dacre, I am happy to find you approve of my endeavours to oppose

the Catholic Relief Bill. I have done what I thought my duty. May God forgive me if I have done wrong, and may God forgive my opponents (*if he can*). Yours affectionately, Eldon.' The parenthesis is exquisite. What paragraph could have expressed half so much? This Lady Clerk formed a direct and intermediate link between Jacobite times and my own. She knew that I was very intimate with Miss Susan Buchanan, whose maternal great-grandfather, Sir Archibald Primrose (of the Rosebery family), suffered at Carlisle in the Stuart cause. She told me she had made Miss B. very angry by telling her: 'Miss Buchanan, you should be much obliged to my family. My father picked up your grandfather's head when the boys were kicking it about the streets of Carlisle, and decently buried it.' The head had been affixed after his execution to the gateway, and had fallen down into the street.

CHAPTER V

ON SCOTTISH STORIES OF WIT AND HUMOUR

WE now come to the last division of our subject, viz. that which we have entitled 'Scottish stories of wit and humour.' The anecdotes under this head, as I have before observed, may not often be essentially different from the stories of the former section. What I *wish* to keep in view is, to distinguish anecdotes which are amusing on account merely of the expressions used, from those which have real wit and humour *combined*, with the purely Scottish vehicle in which they are conveyed.

Of this class I could not have a better specimen to commence with than the defence of the liturgy of his church by John Skinner of Langside. It is witty and clever.

Being present at a party [I think at Lord Forbes's], where were also several ministers of the Establishment, the conversation over their wine turned, among other things, on the prayer-book. Skinner took no part in it, till one minister remarked to him: 'The great faut I hae to your prayer-book is, that ye use the Lord's Prayer sae aften,—ye juist mak a dishclout o't.'

Skinner's rejoinder was, 'Verra true! Ay, man, we mak a dishclout o't, an' we wring't, an' we wring't, an' we wring't, an' the bree o't washes a' the lave o' our prayers.'

No one, I think, could deny the wit of the two following rejoinders.

A ruling elder of a country parish in the west of Scotland was well known in the district as a shrewd and ready-witted man. He got many a visit by persons who

liked a banter, or to hear a good joke. Three young students gave him a call in order to have a little amusement at the elder's expense. On approaching him, one of them saluted him, 'Well, Father Abraham, how are you to-day?' 'You are wrong,' said the other, 'this is old Father Isaac;' 'Tuts,' said the third, 'you are both mistaken; this is old Father Jacob.' David looked at the young men, and in his own way replied, 'I am neither old Father Abraham, nor old Father Isaac, nor old Father Jacob, but I am Saul, the son of Kish, seeking his father's asses, and lo! I've found three o' them.'

For many years the Baptist community of Dunfermline was presided over by brothers David Dewar and James Inglis, the latter of whom has just recently gone to his reward. Brother David was a plain, honest, straightforward man, who never hesitated to express his convictions, however unpalatable they might be to others. Being elected a member of the Prison Board, he was called upon to give his vote in the choice of a chaplain from the licentiates of the Established Kirk. The party who had gained the confidence of the Board had proved rather an indifferent preacher in a charge to which he had previously been appointed; and on David being asked to signify his assent to the choice of the Board, he said, 'Weel, I've no objections to the man, for I understand he has preached a kirk toom (empty) already, and if he be as successful in the jail, he'll maybe preach it vawcant as weel.'

From Mr Inglis, clerk of the Court of Session, I have the following Scottish rejoinder:

'I recollect my father giving a conversation between a Perthshire laird and one of his tenants. The laird's eldest son was rather a simpleton. Laird says, "I am going to send the young laird abroad." "What for?" asks the tenant; answered, "To see the world;" tenant replies, "But lord-sake, Laird, will no the world see *him*?"'

An admirably humorous reply is recorded of a Scotch

officer, well known and esteemed in his day for mirth and humour. Captain Innes of the Guards (usually called Jock Innes by his cotemporaries) was with others getting ready for Flushing or some of those expeditions of the beginning of the great war. His commanding officer (Lord Huntly, my correspondent thinks) remonstrated about the badness of his hat, and recommended a new one: 'Na! na! bide a wee,' said Jock; 'whare we're ga'in', faith, there'll soon be mair hats nor *heads*.'

There is an odd and original way of putting a matter sometimes in Scotch people, which is irresistibly comic, although by the persons nothing comic is intended, as for example, when in 1786 Edinburgh was illuminated on account of the recovery of George III. from severe illness—in a house where great preparation was going on for the occasion, by getting the candles fixed in tin sconces, an old nurse of the family, looking on, exclaimed, 'Ay, it's a braw time for the cannel makers when the king is sick, honest man!'

Scotch gamekeepers had often much dry quiet humour —I was much amused by the answer of one of those under the following circumstances: An Ayrshire gentleman, who was from the first a very bad shot, or rather no shot at all, when out on 1st of September, having failed, time after time, in bringing down a single bird, had at last pointed out to him by his attendant bag-carrier a large covey, thick and close on the stubbles. 'Noo! Mr Jeems, let drive at them, just as they are!' Mr Jeems did let drive, as advised, but not a feather remained to testify the shot. All flew off, safe and sound: 'Hech, sir (remarks his friend), but ye've made thae yins shift their quarters.'

The two following anecdotes of rejoinders from Scottish gudewives, and for which I am indebted, as for many other kind communications, to the Rev. Mr Blair of Dunblane, appear to me as good examples of the peculiar Scottish pithy phraseology which we now refer to, as any that I have met with.

An old lady who lived not far from Abbotsford and from whom the 'Great Unknown' had derived many an ancient tale, was waited upon one day by the author of *Waverley*. On endeavouring to give the authorship the go-by, the old dame protested, 'D'ye think, sir, I dinna ken my ain groats in ither folk's kail?'

A conceited packman called at a farm-house in the west of Scotland, in order to dispose of some of his wares. The goodwife was startled by his southern accent, and his high talk about York, London, and other big places. 'An' whaur come ye frae yersel?' was the question of the gudewife. 'Ou! I am from the Border!' 'The Border. Oh! I thocht that; for we aye think the selvidge is the wakest bit o' the wab!'

Persons who are curious in Scottish stories of wit and humour, speak much of the sayings of a certain 'Laird of Logan' who was a well-known character of the west of Scotland. This same laird of Logan was at a meeting of the heritors of Cumnock, where a proposal was made to erect a new churchyard wall. He met the proposition with the dry remark, 'I never dig dykes till the *tenants* complain.'

The laird sold a horse to an Englishman, saying, 'You buy him as you see him; but he's an *honest* beast.' The purchaser took him home. In a few days he stumbled and fell, to the damage of his own knees and his rider's head. On this the angry purchaser remonstrated with the laird, whose reply was, 'Well, sir, I told you he was an honest beast; many a time has he threatened to come down with me, and I kenned he would keep his word some day.'

At the time of the threatened invasion, the laird had been taunted at a meeting at Ayr with want of a loyal spirit at Cumnock, as at that place no volunteer corps had been raised to meet the coming danger; Cumnock, it should be recollected, being on a high situation, and ten or twelve miles from the coast. 'What sort of people are you, up at Cumnock?' said an Ayr gentle-

man; 'you have not a single volunteer!' 'Never you heed,' says Logan, very quietly; 'if the French land at Ayr, there will soon be plenty of volunteers up at Cumnock.'

I have already had recourse to the Scottish bar for a sample of Scottish wit and humour, p. 62. It is a wide field, and I pretend to no more than gathering a specimen here and there.

John Clerk's translation of the motto of the Celtic Club is capital, and may rank with the translations given at page 40. 'Olim marte nunc arte,' 'Formerly *rubbers*, noo thieves.' (N.B. He had a strong hatred of the race.) Very dry and pithy too was his legal *opinion* given to a claimant of the Annandale peerage, who, when pressing the employment of some obvious forgeries, was warned that, if he persevered, nae doot he might be a peer, but it would be a peer o' anither *tree!*

Harry Erskine's best things have unfortunately been murdered in the jest books. I do not think his neat remark to Walter Scott after he got his Clerkship of Session has been in print. The scheme to bestow it on him had been begun by the Tories, but (most honourably) was completed by the Whigs, and after the fall of the latter Harry met the new Clerk, and congratulated him on his appointment, which he liked all the better, as it was a 'Lay of the Last Ministry!'

The following is an exquisite application of Lord Polkemmet's pet phrase given at page 62. My correspondent heard the phrase repeated, and heard it prefaced by a statement to this effect:[1] 'Weel, Maister Askine, I heard you, and I thocht ye were richt; and I heard you, Dauvid (David Cathcart), and I thocht ye were richt; and now I hae heard Maister Clerk, and I

[1] I refer to the octogenarian author of *The Two Cosmos: a Tale of Fifty Years Ago*, a work which must be highly interesting to every Scotchman for its powerful and graphic delineation of Scottish life and character.

think he is the richtest amang ye. That bathers me, ye see; sae I maun tak hame the process, and wamble it in my wame a wee, and syne ye'se hae an Interlocutor.'

The following story introduces a characteristic account of John Clerk.

Two individuals, the one a mason, the other a joiner or carpenter, both residents in West Portsburgh, formed a copartnery, and commenced building houses within the boundaries of the burgh corporation. One of the partners was a freeman, the other not. The corporation, considering its rights invaded by a non-freeman exercising privileges only accorded to one of their body, brought an action in the court of Session against the interloper, and his partner, as aiding and abetting. Mr John Clerk, then an advocate, was engaged for the defendants. How the cause was decided matters little. What was really curious in the affair, was the naïvely droll manner in which the advocate for the defence opened his pleading before the Lord Ordinary. 'My lord,' commenced John, in his purest Doric, at the same time pushing up his spectacles to his brow, and hitching his gown over his shoulders, 'I wad hae thocht naething o't (the action), had hooses been a new invention, and my clients been caught ouvertly impingin' on the patent richts o' the inventors!'

''Tis sixty year since' the Rev. Mr M'Cubbin, minister of the parish of Douglas, a well-known wit in his day, stepping into the house of the then carrier between Edinburgh and Douglas, inquired, 'What news the day?' 'O, nane ava, sir,' was the response, 'only the packman was here yesterday, and had a loud and lang argument about the preaching of Judas with the tollman, your elder. The packman *mainteened* that as Judas was a hypocrite, he could have made no converts, but your elder thought that though Judas was a hypocrite, he might, for a' that, have had some converts. At length the packman went away, thinking that he had waur't your elder.' The reverend gentleman was about to walk

away too, without note or comment, when he was arrested by the question of the carrier, 'Ah, but, Mr M'Cubbin, what think ye?' The reverend wit, turning round, merely said, 'Ou, the wares might be guid enough, though the deil gat the *packman*.'

A pendant to the story of candid admission on the part of the minister, that the people might be *weary* after his sermon, has been given on the authority of the narrator, a Fife gentleman, ninety years of age when he told it. He had been to church at Elie, and listening to a young and perhaps bombastic preacher, who happened to be officiating for the Rev. Dr Milligan, who was in church. After service, meeting the Doctor in the passage, he introduced the young clergyman, who on being asked by the old man how he did, elevated his shirt collar, and complained of fatigue, and being very much '*tired*.' 'Tired, did ye say, my man,' said the old satirist, who was slightly deaf, 'Lord, man! if you're *half* as tired as I am I pity ye.'

I have been much pleased with an offering from Carluke, containing two very pithy anecdotes. Mr Rankin very kindly writes: 'Your *Reminiscences* are most refreshing. I am very little of a story collector, but I have recorded some of an old schoolmaster, who was a story teller. As a sort of payment for the amusement I have derived from your book I shall give one or two.'

He sends the two following:

'Shortly after Mr Kay had been inducted schoolmaster of Carluke (1790), the bederal called at the school, verbally announcing, proclamation-ways, that Mrs So-and-So's funeral would be on Fuirsday. "At what hour?" asked the dominie. "Ou, ony time atween ten and twa." At two o'clock of the day fixed, Mr K.—quite a stranger to the customs of the district—arrived at the place, and was astonished to find a crowd of men and lads, standing here and there, some smoking, and all *arglebargling*,[1] as if at the end of a fair. He was

[1] Disputing or bandying words backwards and forwards.

instantly, but mysteriously, approached, and touched on the arm by a red-faced bare-headed man, who seemed to be in authority, and was beckoned to follow. On entering the barn, which was seated all round, he found numbers sitting, each with the head bent down, and each with his hat between his knees—all gravity and silence. Anon a voice was heard issuing from the far end, and a long prayer was uttered. They had worked at this—what was called "*a service*" during three previous hours, one party succeeding another, and many taking advantage of every service, which consisted of a prayer by way of grace, a glass of *white* wine, a glass of *red* wine, a glass of *rum*, and a prayer, by way of thanksgiving. After the long invocation, bread and wine passed round. Silence prevailed. Most partook of both *rounds* of wine, but when the rum came, many nodded refusal, and by-and-by the nodding seemed to be universal, and the trays passed on so much the more quickly. A sumphish weather-beaten man, with a large flat blue bonnet on his knee, who had nodded unwittingly, and was about to lose the last chance of a glass of rum, raised his head, saying, amid the deep silence, "Od I daursay I *wull* tak anither gless," and in a sort of vengeful, yet apologetic tone, added, "the auld jaud yince cheeted me wi' a cauve" (calf).'

'Dr Scott, minister of Carluke (1770), was a fine graceful kindly man, always stepping about in his bag wig and cane in hand, with a kind of ready word to every one. He was officiating at a bridal in his parish, where there was a goodly company, had partaken of the good cheer, and waited till the young people were fairly warmed in the dance. A dissenting body had sprung up in the parish, which he tried to think was beneath him even to notice when he could help it, yet never seemed to feel at all keenly when the dissenters were alluded to. One of the chief leaders of this body was at the bridal, and felt it to be his bounden duty to call upon the minister for his reasons for sanctioning

by his presence so sinful an enjoyment. "Weel, minister, what think ye o' this dancin'?" "Why, John," said the minister, blithely, "I think it an excellent exercise for young people, and, I dare say, so do you." "Ah, sir, I'm no sure about it; I see nae authority for't in the Scriptures." "Umph, indeed, John; you cannot forget David." "Ah, sir, Dauvid; gif they were a' to dance as Dauvid did, it would be a different thing a'thegither." "Hoot o fie, hoot o fie, John; would you have the young folk strip to the serk!"'

At pages 87, 88, I have referred to the eccentric laird of Balnamoon, his wig, and his 'speats o' drinking and praying.' A story of this laird is recorded, which I do think is well named, by a correspondent who communicates it as a 'quintessential phasis of dry Scotch humour,' and the explanation of which would perhaps be thrown away upon any one who *needed* the explanation. The story is this: The laird riding past a high steep bank, stopped opposite a hole in it, and said, 'John, I saw a brock gang in there.' 'Did ye?' said John; 'wull ye haud my horse, sir?' 'Certainly,' said the laird; and away rushed John for a spade. After digging for half an hour, he came back, nigh speechless, to the laird, who had regarded him musingly. 'I canna find him, sir,' said John. 'Deed,' said the laird very coolly, 'I wad ha' wondered if ye had, for it's ten year sin' I saw him gang in there.'

Amongst many humorous colloquies between Balnamoon and his servant, the following must have been very racy and very original. The laird, accompanied by Hairy, after a dinner party, was riding, on his way home, through a ford, when he fell off into the water. 'Whae's that fau'n, John?' he inquired. 'Deed,' quoth John, 'I witna an it be na your honour.'

We have more than once had occasion to mention the late Rev. Walter Dunlop of the U.P. Church, Dumfries. To a kind clerical correspondent in that neighbourhood, I am indebted for the following. He was

very much esteemed by his congregation as a faithful and affectionate minister. Few men equalled him for racy humour and originality. Many anecdotes are recorded of him in connection with his ministerial visitations. He was firmly persuaded that the workman was worthy of his meat, and he did not hesitate occasionally to intimate how agreeable certain '*presents*' would be to him and his better half. He was widely respected by all denominations, and his death was greatly lamented.

One evening, while making his pastoral visitations among some of the country members of his flock, he came to a farm-house where he was expected; and the mistress, thinking that he would be in need of refreshment, proposed that he should take his tea before engaging in *exercises*, and said she would soon have it ready. Mr Dunlop replied, 'I aye tak' my tea better when my wark's dune. I'll just be gaun on. Ye can hing the pan on, an' lea' the door ajar, an' I'll draw to a close in the prayer when I hear the haam fizzin'.'

Another day, while engaged in the same duty of visitation, and while offering up prayer, a peculiar sound was heard to issue from his great-coat pocket, which was afterwards discovered to have proceeded from a half-choked duck, which he 'had gotten in a *present*,' and whose neck he had been squeezing all the time to prevent its crying.

On another occasion, after a hard day's labour, and while at a 'denner tea,' as he called it, he kept incessantly praising the 'haam,' and stating that 'Mrs Dunlop at hame was as fond o' haam like that as he was,' when the mistress kindly offered to send her the present of a ham. 'It's unco kin' o' ye, unco kin', but I'll no pit ye to the trouble; I'll just tak' it hame on the horse afore me.' When, on leaving, he mounted, and the ham was put into a sack, some difficulty was experienced in getting it to lie properly. His inventive genius soon cut the Gordian knot. 'I think, mistress, a cheese in the ither en' wad mak' a gran' balance.'

The hint was immediately acted on, and, like another John Gilpin, he moved away with his 'balance true.'

One day, returning from a short visit to the country, he met two ladies in Buccleuch Street, who stopped him to inquire after his welfare and that of his wife. Lifting his hat politely, to the consternation of all three, out tumbled to his feet his handkerchief, followed by a large lump of potted head, which he had received in a 'present,' and was thus carrying home, but which, at the moment, he had entirely forgotten.

One Sunday, after sermon, just before pronouncing the blessing, he made the following intimation: 'My freens, I hae a baaptism at Locharbriggs the nicht, an' maybe some o' ye wad be sae kin' as to gie me a cast oot in a dandy-cart.' On descending from the pulpit, several vehicles of the description were placed at his service.

He would not allow any of his congregation to sleep in church, if his eye caught them. One day he suddenly stopped in his sermon, and said, 'I doot some o' ye hae taen ower mony whey porridge the day; sit up, or I'll name ye oot.'

Some four-and-twenty years ago, when Mr Dunlop lost his excellent and amiable wife, to whom it was well known he was strongly attached, Dr Wightman, parish minister of Kirkmahoe, in the immediate neighbourhood of Dumfries, then upwards of seventy years of age and a bachelor, was invited to the funeral. On entering the house, he was surprised to observe that Mr Dunlop, now a widower for a second time, did not appear to be so much affected as he would have expected, and indeed, seemed wonderfully composed and cheerful. His peculiar humour could not be repressed even on this occasion, for he said, 'Come awa', Dr Wightman, come awa', it will be lang to the day when ye hae onything o' this kind to do.'

At pages 18 and 19, examples are given of national feeling breaking out in national humour upon great

events connected with our national history. The following is, perhaps, as good as any: the Rev. Robert Scott, a Scotchman who forgets not Scotland in his southern vicarage, and whom I have named before as having sent me some good reminiscences, tells me that at Inveraray some thirty years ago he could not help overhearing the conversation of some Lowland cattle-dealers in the public room in which he was. The subject of the bravery of our navy being started, one of the interlocutors expressed his surprise that Nelson should have issued his signal at Trafalgar in the terms '*England expects*,' etc. He was met with the answer (which seemed highly satisfactory to the rest), 'Ay, Nelson only said "*expects*" of the English, he said naething of Scotland, for he *kent* the *Scotch* would do theirs.'

I am assured the following manifestation of national feeling against the memory of a Scottish public character actually took place within a few years: Williamson (the Duke of Buccleuch's huntsman) was one afternoon riding home from hunting through Haddington; and as he passed the old abbey, he saw an ancient woman looking through the iron grating in front of the burial place of the Lauderdale family, holding by the bars, and grinning and dancing with rage. 'Eh, gudewife,' said Williamson, 'what ails ye?' 'It's the Duke o' Lauderdale,' cried she. 'Eh, if I could win at him, I wud rax the banes o' him.'

To this class belongs the following complacent Scottish remark upon Bannockburn. A splenetic Englishman said to a Scottish countryman, something of a wag, that no man of taste would think of remaining any time in such a country as Scotland. To which the canny Scot replied, 'Tastes differ; I'se tak' ye to a place, no far frae Stirling, whaur thretty thousand o' yer countrymen ha' been for five hunder years, an' they've nae thocht o' leavin' yet.'

A north-country drover had, however, a more *tangible* opportunity of gratifying his national animosity against

the southern, and of which he availed himself. Returning homewards, after a somewhat unsuccessful journey, and not in very good humour with the Englishers, when passing through Carlisle, he saw a notice stuck up, offering a reward of £50 for any one who would do a piece of service to the community, by officiating as executioner of the law on a noted criminal then under sentence of death. Seeing a chance to make up for his bad market, and comforted with the assurance that he was unknown there, he undertook the office, hanged the rogue, and got the fee. When moving off with the money, he was twitted as a mean beggarly Scot, doing for money what no *Englishman* would; he replied with a grin and quiet glee, 'I'll hang ye a' at the price.'

A very amusing account of a minister meeting, and by wit and good humour overcoming, the strict opinions of his people in regard to their disapproval of his worldly pursuits and accomplishments, has been given to me from Aberdeenshire. The late Mr Greig, minister at Chapel of Garioch, near Logie, was very musical, and played very well on the violoncello, particularly Scotch music. He was in the habit of spending his evenings at different houses taking his instrument with him. He was very often at Logie, and played to Mrs Leslie's piano. His parishioners began to think all this was wrong, and a deputation was sent to remonstrate with him, and get some promise that these musical evenings should be discontinued. Mr Greig received them very kindly, played them some tunes on his violoncello, gave them some whisky toddy, and they came away, without having been able to come to any understanding on the object of their visit. They thought this would never do, as they did not know what to say to those that sent them. So after they had left the manse, one of their number was sent back to re-open the subject, the rest waiting on the roadside. Again the remonstrant was well received, more tunes, more toddy, and he returned to his companions never having got at the matter of

complaint, but candidly acknowledged his own views: 'I have made up my ain mind that yon big fiddle is a most respectable thing, not like the little *sinfu' fiddlies* that they play at dancing parties,' and so they rested satisfied, and the good minister was allowed to play his big fiddle without further molestation or remonstrance.

I have referred frequently in these pages to Scottish funerals and to Scottish idiots. But there was a frequent *combination* of the two subjects, which seems of late years to have passed away. In many country places, hardly a funeral ever took place without the attendance of the parochial idiot. It seemed almost a necessary association; and such attendance seemed to constitute the great delight of those creatures. I have myself witnessed again and again the sort of funeral scene portrayed by Walter Scott, who no doubt took his description from what was common in his day. 'The funeral pomp set forth—saulies with their batons and gumphions of tarnished white crape. Six starved horses, themselves the very emblems of mortality, well cloaked and plumed, lugging along the hearse with its dismal emblazonry, crept in slow pace towards the place of interment, preceded by Jamie Duff, an idiot, who, with weepers and cravat made of white paper, *attended on every funeral*, and followed by six mourning coaches filled with the company.'—*Guy Mannering*.

The withdrawal of these characters from public view, and the loss of importance which they once enjoyed in Scottish society, seem to me inexplicable. Have they ceased to exist, or are they removed from our sight to different scenes? The fool was, in early times, a very important personage in most Scottish households of any distinction. Indeed, this had been so common as to be a public nuisance.

It seems that persons *assumed* the character, for we find a Scottish Act of Parliament, dated January 19, 1449, with this title: *Act for the way-putting of Fenyent Fules*, etc. (Thomson's Acts of Parliament of Scotland,

vol. i); and it enacts very stringent measures against such persons. They seem to have formed a link between the helpless idiot and the boisterous madman, sharing the eccentricity of the latter and the stupidity of the former, generally adding, however, a good deal of the sharp-wittedness of the *knave*. Up to the middle of the eighteenth century, this appears to have been still an appendage to some families. I have before me a little publication with the title *The Life and Death of Jamie Fleeman, the Laird of Udny's Fool.* Tenth edition. Aberdeen, 1797. With Portrait. Also twenty-sixth edition, of 1829. I should suppose this account of a family fool was a fair representation of a good specimen of the class. He was evidently of defective intellect, but at times showed the odd humour and quick conclusion which so often mark the disordered brain. I can only now give two examples taken from his history: Having found a horseshoe on the road, he met Mr Craigie, the minister of St Fergus, and showed it to him, asking in pretended ignorance, what it was. 'Why, Jamie,' said Mr Craigie good-humouredly, 'anybody that was not a fool would know that is a horseshoe.' 'A!' said Jamie, with affected simplicity, 'what it is to be wise —to ken it's no a meer's shoe!'

On another occasion, when all the country side were hastening to the Perth races, Jamie had cut across the fields and reached a bridge near the town, and sat down upon the parapet. He commenced munching away at a large portion of a leg of mutton which he had somehow become possessed of, and of which he was amazingly proud. The laird came riding past, and seeing Jamie sitting on the bridge, accosted him: 'Ay, Fleeman, are ye here already?' 'Ou ay,' quoth Fleeman, with an air of assumed dignity and archness not easy to describe, while his eye glanced significantly towards the mutton, 'Ou ay, ye ken a body when he *has onything*.'

Of witty retorts by half-witted creatures of this class, I do not know of one more pointed than what is recorded

of such a character who used to hang about the residence of a late Lord Fife. It would appear that some parts of his lordship's estates were barren, and in a very unproductive condition. Under the improved system of agriculture and of draining, great preparations had been made for securing a good crop in a certain field, where Lord Fife, his factor, and others interested in the subject were collected together. There was much discussion, and some difference of opinion as to the crop with which the field had best be sown. The idiot retainer, who had been listening unnoticed to all that was said, at last cried out, 'Saw't wi' factors, ma lord; they are sure to thrive everywhere.'

'Daft Will Speir' was passing the minister's glebe, where haymaking was in progress. The minister asked Will if he thought the weather would keep up, as it looked rather like rain. 'Weel,' said Will, 'I canna be very sure, but I'll be passin' this way the nicht, an' I'll ca' in and tell ye.' This poor creature had a high sense of duty. It appears he had been given the charge of the coal stores at the Earl of Eglinton's. Having on one occasion been reprimanded for allowing the supplies to run out before further supplies were ordered, he was ever afterwards most careful to fulfil his duty. In course of time poor Will became 'sick unto death,' and the minister came to see him. Thinking him in really a good frame of mind, the minister asked him, in presence of the laird and others, if there were not *one great* thought which was ever to him the highest consolation in his hour of trouble? 'Ou ay,' gasped the sufferer, 'Lord be thankit, a' the bunkers are fu'.'

'Well, Will,' said the Earl one day to Will Speir, seeing the latter finishing his dinner, 'have you had a good dinner to-day?' (Will had been grumbling some time before.) 'Ou, vera gude,' answered Will: ''but gin onybody asks if I got a dram after't, what will I say?'

There was an idiot who lived long in Lauder, and seems to have had a great resemblance to the jester of old times. He was a staunch supporter of the Established Church. One day, some one gave him a bad shilling. On Sunday he went to the Seceders' Meeting-house, and when the ladle was taken round, he put in his bad shilling, and took out elevenpence halfpenny. Afterwards he went in high glee to the late Lord Lauderdale, calling out, 'I've cheated the Seceders the day, my lord; I've cheated the Seceders.'

Jemmy had long harboured a dislike to the steward on the property, which he paid off in the following manner: Lord Lauderdale and Sir Anthony used to take him out shooting; and one day Lord Maitland (he was then), on having to cross the Leader, said, 'Now, Jemmy, you shall carry me through the water,' which Jemmy duly did. Bowmaker, Lord Lauderdale's steward, who was shooting with them, said, 'Now, Jemmy, you must carry *me* over.' 'Vera weel,' said Jemmy. He took the steward on his back, and when he had quietly carried him half way across the river, he dropped him quietly into the water.

I have recorded an anecdote received from Mr W. Chambers of a half idiot, Rab Hamilton, whose name was familiar to most persons who knew Ayr in former days. He certainly was a natural; but the following anecdote of him from a kind correspondent at Ayr, sanctions the opinion that he must have occasionally said such clever things as made some think him more rogue than fool. Dr Auld often showed him kindness, but being once addressed by him when in a hurry and out of humour, he said, 'Get away, Rab; I have nothing for you to-day.' 'Whaw, whew,' cried Rab in a half howl, half whining tone, 'I dinna want onything the day, Mister Auld; I wanted to tell you an awsome dream I hae had. I dreamt I was deed.' 'Weel what then?' said Dr Auld. 'Ou, I was carried far, far, and up, up, up, till I cam to heeven's yett, where I chappit and

chappit, and chappit, till at last an angel keekit out, and said, "Wha are ye?" "Am puir Rab Hamilton." "Whaur are ye frae?" "Frae the wicked town o' Ayr." "I dinna ken ony sic place," said the angel. "Oh but I'm joost frae there." Weel, the angel sends for the Apostle Peter, and Peter comes wi' his key and opens the yett, and says to me, "Honest man, do you come frae the auld toun o' Ayr?" "Deed do I," says I. "Weel," says Peter, "I ken the place, but naebody's cam frae the town o' Ayr, no since the year"'—so-and-so—mentioning the year when Dr Auld was inducted into the parish. Dr Auld laughed, and told him to go about his business.

A daft individual used to frequent the same district, about whom a variety of opinions were entertained—some people thinking him not so foolish as he sometimes seemed. On one occasion, a person wishing to test whether he knew the value of money, held out a sixpence and a penny, and offered him his choice. 'I'll tak the wee ane,' he says, giving as his modest reason, 'I'se no be greedy.' At another time, a miller, laughing at him for his witlessness, he said, 'Some things I ken, and some I dinna ken.' On being asked what he knew, he said, 'I ken a miller has aye a gey fat sou.' 'An' what d'ye no ken?' said the miller. 'Ou,' he returned, 'I dinna ken at wha's expense she's fed at.'

The following anecdote is told regarding the late Lord Dundrennan: a half silly basket-woman passing down his avenue at Cumbstone one day, he met her, and said, 'My good woman, there's no road this way.' 'Na, sir,' she said, 'I think ye're wrang there; I think it's a most beautifu' road.'

A very amusing collision of one of these penurious lairds (mentioned at page 91), a certain Mr Gordon of Rothy, with a half-daft beggar wanderer of the name of Jock Muilton, has been recorded. The laird was very shabby, as usual, and, meeting Jock, began to banter him on the subject of his dress: 'Ye're very grand,

Jock. That's fine claes ye hae gotten; whaur did ye get that coat?' Jock told him who had given him his coat, and then, looking slily at the laird, he inquired, as with great simplicity, 'and where did ye get *yours*, laird?'

The following is another example of shrewd and ready humour in one of that class which, from some unaccountable reason, seems almost passed away from the land. In this case the idiot was musical, and earned a few stray pence by playing Scottish airs on a flute. He resided at Stirling, and used to hang about the door of the inn to watch the arrival and departure of travellers. A lady who used to give him something occasionally, was just starting, and said to Jamie that she had only a fourpenny piece, and that he must be content with that, for she could not stay to get more. Jamie was not satisfied; and as the lady drove out, expressed his feelings by playing with all his might 'O weerie o' the *toom pouch*.'[1]

The following anecdote, supplied by Mr Blair, is an amusing illustration, both of the funeral propensity, and of the working of a defective brain, in a half-witted carle, who used to range the county of Galloway, armed with a huge pike-staff, and who one day met a funeral procession a few miles from Wigton. A long train of carriages, and farmers riding on horseback, suggested the propriety of his bestriding his staff and following after the funeral. The procession marched at a brisk pace, and on reaching the kirkyard style, as each rider dismounted, 'Daft Jock' descended from his wooden steed, besmeared with mire and perspiration, exclaiming, 'Hech, sirs, had it no been for the fashion o' the thing, I micht as weel hae been on my ain feet.'

I think the following is about as good a sample of what we call Scotch 'pawky' as any I know: A countryman had lost his wife and a favourite cow on the same day. His friends consoled him for the loss of the wife;

[1] Empty pocket.

and being highly respectable, several hints and offers were made towards getting another for him. 'Ou ay,' he at length replied, 'you're a' keen aneuch to get me anither wife, but no yin o' ye offers to gie me anither coo.'

I have two anecdotes of two peers, who might be said to come under the description of half-witted. In their case, the same sort of dry Scottish humour came out under the cloak of mental disease. A Scottish nobleman of the last century had been a soldier the greater part of his life, but was obliged to come home on account of aberration of mind, superinduced by hereditary propensity. Desirous of putting him under due restraint, and, at the same time, of engaging his mind in his favourite pursuit, his friends procured a Sergeant Briggs to be his companion and overseer; and to render the sergeant acceptable as a companion, they introduced him to the old earl as *Colonel* Briggs. Being asked how he liked the colonel, the earl answered, 'Very well; he is a sensible man, and a good soldier, but he *smells damnably of the halbert.*'

Another case of humour in a *mad* Scottish nobleman has been narrated, and, I suppose, is traditionary. In Scotland, some hundred years ago, madhouses did not exist, or were on a very limited scale; and there was often great difficulty in procuring suitable accommodation for patients who required special treatment and seclusion from the world. The nobleman in question had been consigned to the Canongate prison, and his position there was far from comfortable. An old friend called to see him, and asked how it had happened that he was placed in so unpleasant a situation. His reply was: 'Sir, it was more the kind interest and patronage of my friends than my own merits that have placed me here.' 'But have you not remonstrated or complained?' asked his visitor. 'I told them,' said his lordship, 'that they were a pack of infernal villains.' 'Did you?' said his friend; 'that was bold language; and what did

they say to that?' 'Oh,' said the peer, 'I took care not to tell them till they were fairly out of the place, and weel up the Canongate.'

Analogous with the language of the *defective* intellect is the language of the imperfectly formed intellect, and I have often thought there was something very touching and very fresh in the expression of feelings and notions by children. I have given an example at page 86, but the following is, to my taste, a charming specimen: A little boy had lived for some time with a very penurious uncle, who took good care that the child's health should not be injured by over-feeding. The uncle was one day walking out, the child at his side, when a friend accosted him, accompanied by a greyhound. While the elders were talking, the little fellow, never having seen a dog of so slim and slight a texture, clasped the creature round the neck with the impassioned cry, 'Oh, doggie, doggie, and div ye live wi' your uncle tae, that ye are so thin!'

In connection with funerals, I am indebted to the kindness of Lord Kinloch for a characteristic anecdote of cautious Scottish character in the west country. It was the old fashion, still practised in some districts, to carry the coffin to the grave on long poles or 'spokes,' as they were commonly termed. There were usually two bearers abreast on each side. On a certain occasion, one of the two said to his companion, 'I'm awfu' tired wi' carryin'.' 'Do you *carry?*' was the interrogatory in reply. 'Yes; what do you do?' 'Oh,' said the other, 'I aye *lean.*' His friend's fatigue was at once accounted for.

I am strongly tempted to give the following account of a parish functionary in the words of a kind correspondent from Kilmarnock, although communicated in the following very flattering terms: 'In common with every Scottish man worthy of the name, I have been delighted with your book, have the ambition to add a pebble to the cairn, and accordingly send you a *bellman*

story; it has, at least, the merit of being unprinted and unedited.'

The incumbent of Craigie parish, in this district of Ayrshire, had asked a Mr Wood, tutor in the Cairnhill family, to officiate for him on a particular Sunday. Mr Wood, however, between the time of being asked and the appointed day, got intimation of the dangerous illness of his father; in the hurry of setting out to see him, he forgot to arrange for the pulpit being filled. The bellman of Craigie parish, by name Matthew Sinning, and at this time about eighty years of age, was a very little 'crined'[1] old man, and always wore a broad Scottish blue bonnet, with a red 'bob' on the top. The parish is a small rural one, so that Matthew knew every inhabitant in it, and had seen the most of them grow up. On this particular day, after the congregation had waited for some time, Matthew was seen to walk very slowly up the middle of the church, with the large Bible and psalm-book under his arm, to mount the pulpit stair; and after taking his bonnet off, and smoothing down his forehead with his 'loof,' thus addressed the audience:

'My freens, there was ane Wuds tae ha'e preached here the day, but he has nayther comed himsel', nor had the ceevility tae sen' us the scart o' a pen. Ye'll bide here for ten meenonts, and gin naebody comes forrit in that time, ye can gang awa' hame. Some say his feyther's dead, as for that I kenna.'

The following is another illustration of the character given at page 106 of the old Scottish betheral. One of those worthies, who was parochial gravedigger, had been missing for two days or so, and his reverence had in vain sent to discover him to most likely places. He bethought, at last, to make inquiry at a 'public' at some distance from the village, and on entering the door met his man in the trance, quite fou, staggering out, supporting himself with a hand on each wa'. To the

[1] Shrivelled.

minister's sharp rebuke and rising wrath for his indecent and shameful behaviour, John, a wag in his way, and emboldened by liquor, made answer: 'Deed, sir, sin' I ca'd at the manse, I ha'e buried an auld wife, and I've just drucken her, hough and horn.' Such was his candid admission of the manner in which he had disposed of the church fees paid for the interment.

An encounter of wits between a laird and an elder. A certain laird in Fife, well known for his parsimonious habits, whilst his substance largely increased did not increase his liberality, and his weekly contribution to the church collection never exceeded the sum of one penny. One day, however, by mistake, he dropped into the plate at the door a five-shilling-piece, but discovering his error before he was seated in his pew, hurried back, and was about to replace the dollar by his customary penny, when the elder in attendance cried out, 'Stop, laird, ye may put *in* what ye like, but ye maun tak naething *out!*' The laird, finding his explanations went for nothing, at last said, 'A weel, I suppose I'll get credit for it in heaven.' 'Na, na, laird,' said the elder, 'ye'll only get credit for the *penny*.'

Of *table* stories there is an anecdote which may be placed along with those of the two worthy farmers, page 86, and which has occurred to my recollection as a Deeside story. My aunt, Mrs Forbes, receiving a farmer at Banchory Lodge, offered him a draught of ale, which was accepted, and a large glass of it quickly drunk off. My aunt, observing no froth or head, said she was afraid it was not a good bottle. 'Oh, vera good, mem; it's just some strong o' the apple' (a common country expression for beer which is rather tart or sharp). The fact turned out that a bottle of *vinegar* had been decanted by mistake.

And further, upon the subject of tenants at table. It was a most pungent remark of an honest farmer to the servant who put beside him a dessert spoon, when he had been helped to pudding: 'Tak it awa, mi man, mi mou's as big for puddin' as it is for kail.'

I have received from Rev. William Blair, A.M., U.P. minister at Dunblane, many kind communications. I have made a selection, which I now group together, and they have this character in common, that they are all anecdotes of ministers:

Rev. Walter Dunlop of Dumfries was accompanying a funeral one day, when he met a man driving a flock of geese. The wayward disposition of the bipeds at the moment was too much for the driver's temper, and he indignantly cried out 'Deevil choke them.' Mr Dunlop walked a little farther on, and passed a farmstead, where a servant was driving out a number of swine, and banning them with 'Deevil tak them.' Upon which, Mr D. stept up to him, and said, 'Ay, ay, my man, your gentleman'll be wi' ye i' the noo; he's just back the road there a bit, choking some geese till a man.'

Shortly after the disruption, Dr Cook of St Andrews was introduced to Mr Dunlop, upon which occasion Mr D. said, 'Weel, sir, ye've been lang Cook, Cooking them, but ye've dished them at last.'

Mr Clark of Dalreoch, whose head was vastly disproportioned to his body, met Mr Dunlop one day. 'Weel, Mr Clark, that's a good head o' yours.' 'Indeed it is, Mr D., I could contain yours inside of my own.' 'Just sae,' echoed Mr D., 'I was e'en thinkin' it was geyan *toom*.'

Mr Dunlop happened one day to be present in a Church Court of a neighbouring Presbytery. A Rev. Dr was asked to pray, and declined. On the meeting adjourning, Mr D. stept up to the Doctor, and asked how he did. The Doctor never having been introduced, did not reply. Mr D. withdrew, and said to his friend, 'Eh! but is'na he a queer man, that Doctor, he'll neither speak to God nor man.'

The Rev. John Brown of Whitburn was riding out one day on an old pony, when he was accosted by a rude youth. 'I say, Mr. Broon, what gars your horse's tail wag that way?' 'Oo, jest what gars your tongue wag; it's fashed wi' a *wakeness*.'

About sixty years ago there were two ministers in Sanquhar of the name of Thomson, one of whom was father of the late Dr Andrew Thomson of Edinburgh, the other was father of Rev. Dr T. of Balfron. The domestic in the family of the latter was rather obtrusive with her secret devotions, sometimes kneeling on the stairs at night, and talking loud enough to be heard. On a communion season she was praying devoutly for her minister: 'Remember Mr Tamson, no him at the Green, but oor ain Mr Tamson.'

Rev. Mr Leslie of Morayshire, combined the duties of justice of peace with those of parochial clergyman. One day he was taken into confidence by a culprit who had been caught in the act of smuggling, and was threatened with a heavy fine. The culprit was a staunch Seceder, and owned a small farm. Mr L. said to him, 'The king will come in the cadger's road some day. Ye wadna come to the parish kirk though it were to save your life, wad ye? Come noo, an' i'se mak ye a' richt!' Next Sabbath the seceding smuggler appeared in the parish kirk, and as the paupers were receiving parochial allowance, Mr L. slipt a shilling into the smuggler's hand. When the J. P. Court was held, Mr L. was

present, and when a fine was proposed to be exacted from the smuggler, 'Fine!' said Mr L.; 'he's mair need o' something to get duds to his back. He's ane o' my poor roll; I gie'd him a shilling just last Sabbath.'

A worthy old Seceder used to ride from Gargunnock to Bucklyvie every Sabbath to attend the Burgher kirk. One day as he rode past the parish kirk of Kippen, the elder at the plate accosted him: 'I'm sure, John, it's no like the thing to see you ridin' in sic a doon-pour o' rain, sae far by to thae Seceders. Ye ken the mercifu' man is mercifu' to his beast. Could ye no step in by.' 'Weel,' said John, 'I wadna care sae muckle about stablin' my beast inside, but it's anither thing mysel' gain' in.'

The Rev. Robert Blair was sometime minister of St Andrews, and 'famous for his familiar way.' His Majesty Charles II. on one occasion visited him, and found him sitting on a chair, being at the time under bodily infirmity, which kept him from rising up before the king. Mrs. Blair ran to fetch a seat for his Majesty, when Mr Blair said, 'My heart, don't trouble yourself, he is a young man, and may draw in a chair for himself.' May not this have been partly the cause why Charles used to say that Presbyterianism was no religion for a gentleman?

The Rev. Dr George Lawson of Selkirk acted for many years as theological tutor to the Secession Church. One day on entering the Divinity Hall he overheard a student remark that the professor's wig was uncombed. That same student, on that very day, had occasion to preach a sermon before the doctor, for which he received a bit of severe criticism, the sting of which was in its tail: 'You said my wig wasna kaimed this mornin', my lad, but I think I've redd your head to you.'

The Rev. John Heugh of Stirling was one day admonishing one of his people of the sin of intemperance. 'Man, John, you should never drink except when you're dry.' 'Weel, sir,' quoth John, 'that's what I'm aye doin', for I am never slockin'd.'

The Rev. Mr M—— of Bathgate came up to a street pavior one day, and addressed him: 'Eh! John, what's this you're at?' 'Oh! I'm mending the ways of Bathgate!' 'Ah, John, I've long been tryin' to mend the ways o' Bathgate, an' they're no weel yet.' 'Weel, Mr M., if you had tried my plan, and come doon to your *knees*, ye wad maybe hae come mair speed!'

There once lived in Cupar a merchant whose store contained supplies of every character and description, so that he was commonly known by the soubriquet of Robbie A'Thing. One day a minister who was well known for making a free use of his notes in the pulpit, called at the store asking for a rope and pin to tether a young calf in the glebe. Robbie at once informed him that he could not furnish such articles to him. But the minister being somewhat importunate, said, 'Oh! I thought you were named Robbie A'Thing from the fact of your keeping all kinds of goods.' 'Weel a weel,' said Robbie, 'I keep a'thing in my shop but calf's tether-pins and paper sermons for ministers to read.'

It was a somewhat whimsical advice supported by whimsical argument, which used to be given by John Brown of Haddington to his students, on going abroad among people, 'to sup well at the kail, for if they were good they were worth the supping, and if not they might be sure there was not much worth coming after them.'

A good many families in and around Dunblane rejoice in the patronymic of Dochart. This name, which sounds somewhat Irish, is derived from Loch Dochart, in Argyllshire. The M'Gregors having been proscribed, were subjected to severe penalties, and a group of the clan having been hunted by their superiors, swam the stream which issues from Loch Dochart, and in gratitude to the river they afterwards assumed the family name of Dochart. A young lad of this name, on being sent to Glasgow College, presented a letter from his minister to Reverend Dr Heugh of Glasgow. He gave his name as Dochart, and the name in the letter was M'Gregor: 'Oh,' said the Doctor, 'I fear there is some mistake about your identity, the names don't agree.' 'Weel, sir, that's the way they spell the name in our country.'

Mr Blair, as I have said, is settled at Dunblane, and there could hardly be a stronger proof of the respect paid to the memory of the saintly Leighton than the fact of the U.P. manse there being called 'The Leighton Manse.' Mr Blair has sent me a few traditions of the good Bishop, which I subjoin with much pleasure:

Archbishop Leighton, before his elevation to the archiepiscopal see of Glasgow, was for several years Bishop of Dunblane. It was his custom to walk along the banks of the Allan, under the shade of some fine old trees. One day he was met by a lady whose feelings were much stronger than her judgment, and who informed the good man that she had had a very extraordinary dream. The bishop asking her to let him know what the dream betokened, she informed him that she dreamed she was his wife, and she was afraid lest anything might hinder such a consummation, so devoutly to be wished, from coming true! The bishop thereupon informed her that he would tarry till the dream was doubled, and he himself had dreamt that he was her husband, and then he would take all care to have it verified. The doubling of the dream never occurred, for the bishop lived and died in single blessedness.

The Archbishop's mode of life in Dunblane was one of extreme quietude and simplicity. His domestic establishment was anything but numerous. His man 'John' did all his extra work, and used sometimes to go up the Allan fishing, leaving the bishop a prisoner at home, having forgetfully locked the door and put the key in his pocket. Instead of being turned off, as he deserved, the meek man only requested that next time John went to fish he should like him to leave the key in the door.

His treatment of the non-conformists in his diocese was in marked contrast with that of his coadjutors on the Episcopal bench. Fines and imprisonments were unknown in Dunblane. He ruled his people by the law of kindness. Indeed, his see was a land of Goshen, while all around was being deluged as with the ten plagues. Tradition has it that on one occasion a fugitive from persecution sought and found asylum in Dunblane from the fury of the pursuers. On another occasion, he was informed of a family near Crosscaply that frequented conventicles. 'Well,' said the bishop, 'if they get the word elsewhere, so

be it.' The informant wishing to have recourse to violence, the bishop said 'No, no, ye may go and lock the door on them, *but be sure you lock it fast*,' that is, leave them unmolested. An old man informs me that he had in early youth received many traditions of the days of Leighton from one Laird Wright, whose grandfather was baptized by the covenanters, at a burnside near the long range of 'hills ayont Dunblane,' called Slimaback, from which circumstance he was commonly known by the name of Slimadykes. Laird Wright told him of a covenanter who was pursued by a troop of dragoons through Dunblane, as far as the grass yard, and the bishop's walk and well. Here he attempted the dangerous expedient of crossing the Allan, which happened to be in full flood from bank to brae, and succeeded in crossing the swollen stream. The dragoons hesitated a moment as to whether they should follow, upon which the fugitive calmly answered, 'Dinna come ower, for your guide's no sae trusty as mine.'

I have now the pleasure of introducing some more *Reminiscences* from the pen of the Rev. Dr Clason. I had asked his kind assistance for some information on the curious question of the *tent preaching* at country communions (see page 162 of this volume), and I have the following communication. I am quite sure that my readers will agree with me in considering his account of the joint parochial communion services to be *most interesting:*

'In spite of your laudations of my poor contributions to your volume of *Reminiscences*, which, you are aware, it was my wish, in the first instance, should be given to the world, if given at all, without any mention of my name, I have been induced, in compliance with your request, to send you some additional scraps for the supplementary volume which you have now in hand. From these you can select anything that suits your purpose. I am afraid, however, that there may be some feelings of restraint on me from knowing the fact, that I am not only writing to you, but, through you, to the public.

'The question has sometimes been put to me, What is the use of your *Reminiscences?* To this I have only time to answer, in the true style of a Scotchman, by putting another question: What is the use of two-thirds of the publications of the present day?

'In looking over what I formerly wrote on "Funerals," I wish to supply an unaccountable omission. Something ought to have been said of our cemeteries and of the improvements that are going forward with respect to them in our own day.[1] Nothing could well be more discreditable than the state in which they were, universally, in my younger years—and some types of the olden times still remain among us. It is hard to explain how all classes should have been so long satisfied with a state of things so unworthy of our country. One thing is certain, that it cannot be ascribed to any *indifference* about the ashes of the dead. We never were indifferent. In fact there is nothing about which even the humblest classes among us are more jealous, than that the remains of their kindred shall be undisturbed, and *that* every one has been made to feel, who, like myself, has taken in hand to make improvements in a churchyard. I have heard quiet and worthy men speak of the body-lifters, or "all-night-men" as they were wont to be called when their occupation was in vogue, with a ferocity in striking contrast to their ordinary bearing and character. Perhaps you will allow me to give an illustration of this feeling of respect for the dead. It occurred many years ago, during my residence as a minister in a country parish. A young woman, the eldest of a family of daughters, died,—the mother was a widow. They were in easy circumstances, and dwelt much alone. Well do I remember the circumstances. It was the time when Scottish hearts were astir, for George the Fourth held his Court at Holyrood, and towards the ancient palace the steps or the movements of dwellers in town and country were bent. But in the widow's house of mourning there was only one engrossing thought and care, and that was, that the mortal remains of the beloved one who had so lately left it should lie undisturbed in their resting-place. They sought no help from neighbours—

[1] It will be seen that I have anticipated Dr Clason's proposal (page 144, etc.).

they communed alone; and the issue was that the second daughter, a talented, energetic, and somewhat eccentric girl, regularly went out at the darkening, and made her bed beside her sister's grave. This she continued to do till all apprehension of danger was removed.

'It is now my purpose to write something, *first*, of social changes; *secondly*, of changes in certain religious observances among the Presbyterians.

'I. Social Changes. (1) On this head we have great cause to congratulate our medical friends on the high and influential position to which *their* profession has now attained in our country parishes as well as towns. Sorry am I to record, that in the earlier part of the present century their honours were, to a large extent, divided between the gardeners and the village blacksmith. Not that the regular practitioners were altogether overlooked, but those who called them in were generally sneered at as "the big folk." A kind friend of mine in early life, an M.D., had a gardener, to whom the title of Doctor was as regularly given as to his master. Nay more, he was called Doctor and Chow, or Inshow. The meaning of the latter appellation I never understood. Happy man he! he inherited his degree from his father, and his diploma was attested by the universal consent of the world in which he lived. Having never put myself into the hand either of gardener or smith, I can say nothing of their skill; but they professed to bleed and blister, to cure rheumatism, to pull teeth, etc., etc. The gardener had herbs ready at hand for various affections, and the smith had pincers —remedies for the diseases of horses and cattle—and why should they not be made available for the cure of human beings? True, the wrong tooth might sometimes be extracted, but the apology was always ready—"The best will make a mistak!"

'(2) Every one who knows anything of the history of this country since the beginning of the present cen-

tury, must be aware of the change that has taken place in social and domestic life, in consequence of the rapid progress of agriculture and of arts. It is not needful to enlarge on the subject; but it is interesting to advert to the fact. Formerly the farmers reared their own flax, the lint was prepared, the heckler was called for, and the little spinning-wheel was plied, for the manufacture of thread, by the females of the family. The village weaver accomplished the rest, and the linen, coarse or fine, was sent home to be bleached by the housewife, and turned to practical use by the younger females. So in regard to the more substantial dress. The wool was gathered from the flocks, it was teased (a fine play for the young children), and the large wheel, over which the gudewife presided, was called into requisition. Her work done, the dyer and the weaver completed the process. But ere the gudeman and the bairns could appear in the kirk or at market fully equipped in new suits and substantial clothing, another official must be called in—the tailor. At that time the work was not sent to him, but he went to his work in the farmhouse. This circumstance made him a man of some authority and importance, for he had a discretionary power to give the earliest visits to those families whom he preferred. On this account it was always deemed prudent to be kind to him. He lived as the family did, and the fare was not worse when the tailor came. On the other hand, he was always on honour—no telling of tales out of the house, while he had the full privilege of making himself agreeable within the walls—a song to the young, and all manner of grave questions discussed with those who resorted to him. Moreover, it was considered as quite within the rules that he should resort to a sly practical joke, for that promoted the hilarity of the family. For instance, the Lady Pendreich, who was rich but stingy, had shown an inclination somewhat to economize her fare. On one occasion she complained that the eggs were too hard. "Never mind," quoth the

tailor, "we'll make them saft wi' butter." Next day they were too soft: "Never mind, we'll make them thick wi' butter." Another day he had dined quite to his satisfaction, but still, though the fare was good, he had taken a wonderful longing for a *dram*. None, however, was offered, and so he set to his work; but soon, in handling his goose, he cried out that he had burnt his fingers, and could work no more that day. The lady was in great distress, for her affairs were urgent, and for once her economy failed her. What was to be done? He cried for the whisky bottle and a cup. These were readily tendered, and now the field was his own. He calmly filled the cup to the brim, and having drained it, he turned to the lady and politely said, "We'll let the saw [1] seek the sair, mem!"

'Such was the tailor in former days—the parish was his world, and he had a fair opportunity of taking a gage of the character and hospitalities of all its inhabitants.

'II. But I must now turn to graver matters. When I promised to say something of "Presbyterian Observances," my purpose was to take up a variety of points in which there has been a marked change within our own memory; but, on second thoughts, I think it better to confine myself to one particular, namely, to the manner in which the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was formerly dispensed among the Presbyterians of this country; and, in writing on this point, I crave the candid attention of your readers.

'It is well known that through the whole of last century, and for nearly the first quarter of the present, the usage was, when the Lord's Supper was celebrated in any particular parish, to invite the ministers and inhabitants of the parishes adjacent to unite in observing the holy ordinance. This arrangement took its rise, not from any disrespect to the division of the country into *parishes*, for our forefathers knew as well as ourselves the manifold benefits, political, social, economic,

[1] Salve or ointment.

and spiritual, resulting from it. The very reverse was the case; and it is somewhat interesting to mark how anxiously the General Assembly watched lest the parochial tie should be weakened or broken. It is also noteworthy that this measure was not specially suggested and adopted by any particular party: it was simultaneously acquiesced in by all sections of the church, and it was as firmly clung to by the Moderate clergy as by those who were opposed to them, of which I have ample evidence.

'The question then comes to be, how such a practice took its rise without the interposition of any ecclesiastical authority, and I apprehend we cannot rightly dispose of it unless we take into account what was the condition of our country immediately after the Revolution. Those intrusted with the spiritual interests of Scotland could not then have done their duty, unless they had done their utmost to promote a catholic spirit. Allusion has already been made to parochial animosities that then prevailed, but we must take into account the causes that produced them. The country was broken into fragments. Among the clergy there were those who had been antecedently ministers of the Episcopal church, but who had conformed to Presbyterianism; there were others who had accepted the indulgence; and there were others, few in number indeed, who had never in any way owned the Government of the Stuarts. Among the people, there were those who under the former reign had been steady conformists, and who, it may be supposed, still retained their preference for the Episcopal church; and there was no doubt an inveterate grudge between those who had taken the indulgence and those who had scorned to own the dethroned dynasty in any way. Again, it is well known that there were at that time in the country hosts of "Masterful Beggars," and others who set all law at defiance, and whom it seemed to the wisest politician in our land a hopeless task to reduce to habits of good order by the use of any ordinary means. How, then, were all these disorderly elements

to be fused into one coherent mass. The task was a hard one, and it seems to me that the measures that the church devised for accomplishing her part of the work were salutary and wise. It is very easy for us to heap reproaches on the memory of our forefathers, as if they had lent themselves to be the patrons of disorder in ecclesiastical affairs: but let us cease to blame till we have found out in what way we could, under their circumstances, have done better. The ministers and church members of adjoining parishes were invited to meet together, to forget former differences, and to join in the great Gospel banquet. There were many accordingly that came to the feast—the parish churches could not accommodate them, and so a temporary pulpit was erected in the open air, and they were addressed by successive ministers till they had, in turn, the opportunity of joining in the peculiar services of the day. It is granted that many were present at the open air services who came without any other purpose than to hear, and of those there were doubtless some who had hitherto lived without the pale of any church, but there were not wanting instances in which "The fool that came to scoff remained to pray."

'It has no doubt been long the fashion in certain quarters to represent the communion season as mere scenes of confusion and excess, sanctioned by Church authority; and it is granted that as the bad men often mixed with the good, the assemblies must, on this account, present themselves in two aspects. On the one hand, the light-hearted and profane would too often indulge in levity and excess, while, on the other hand, devout and serious men welcomed them as seasons of joy and peace, which they really were to many.

'This is too long a preface to my reminiscences, but it seemed to me unavoidable. Like others of my age, I was familiar with all the peculiarities of a Scottish Communion Sabbath from my early years; I saw its beauties and its blemishes. There was much levity among the

young and careless, and much gravity among the thoughtful and serious. I now refer to the open air services. The fact that the auditors were of a character so mixed, fully warranted a variety in the sermons delivered. There were full statements of the Gospel, and the consolation resulting from it. There were solemn warnings to the wicked, and tender appeals to those who were about to adjourn to the church in order to join in the communion service. Those who communicated were by no means exclusively persons from adjoining parishes. There were others who came from *far*, but who had old hereditary ties to the church, which they delighted to revisit. They sat with their children by the graves of their forefathers, and heard the Word of God, and in due time entered the sanctuary to commemorate the love of their ever-living Lord.

'Believe me, this is no fancied picture, but is drawn from the life. As to the use of the refreshments provided for these occasions, I can speak from accurate information and acquaintance. There were, alas! instances of extravagance and excess on the part of some at least in the mixed multitude assembled—these were spots in the feast of love; but in regard to all those who had any regard to character, any respect for decency, the case was far otherwise. In our early years we went to the neighbouring communion—all the world went—we were careful not to look near the manse, for obvious reasons of delicacy and consideration, but there were always some of the farmers ready to take us under their charge, in the way of providing refreshment. It was a frugal banquet, but suitable for every good purpose. In regard to the conversation, it was grave, without any constraint; there was some reference, of course, amongst the speakers, to what they had heard and done, but there was no parade, no grimace.

'Many of your readers will doubtless think that I have been altogether one-sided, and extravagantly favourable in the description of the Scottish Communion

Sabbath in former days, and I will readily own this if they will join with me in lamenting that the author of *The Cottar's Saturday Night* saw nothing in the scene before him but what furnished matter for a lampoon unworthy of his genius. Why was this so? Alas, it is a sad story, but it has now been told with stern fidelity. A number of the clergy in his neighbourhood had imbibed Socinian opinions, but there were men on the opposite side who were far more than a match for them, and so, when argument failed, the beaten party had no recourse but to hound on the man of genius to pour on their adversaries his profane and coarse invectives. How Burns felt the downfall of the faction he served we are not told. But the subject is unworthy of further notice, and only deserves to be attended to as it explains what has always appeared to me a mystery in the history of the works of Burns.

'Although the poetry of Burns speedily found its way into the hands of every one, yet it does not appear that the peculiar observances connected with the Lord's Supper at the time were in any way disturbed by what he had written. It is not very likely that devout men would be scared from the enjoyment of a valued privilege by one who had so little title to regard in religious matters at least, on account either of his principles or character. Nay, it is probable that the description he gave of the abuses that prevailed, may have induced many who had some regard to propriety and decorum to abstain from taking part in scenes that would only bring discredit on their name. So that the Communion Sabbath, as I saw it in youth, may have been a fair representation of what it was early in last century.

'But the time came when there was an entire change in the public feelings and habits. How far this resulted from the economic revolution already referred to, viz. the breaking of the small farms, and the dispersion of families among our towns and cities, when they earned for themselves, in the prosecution of business or of the

useful arts, a far more ample provision than the little holdings they had cultivated could afford, it is hardly worth while to inquire. The Lord's Supper began to be more frequently celebrated in country parishes, and from this and other causes, the consequence ensued, that very few of the people thought of communicating with other congregations than their own. My country parishioners were wont to tell me of the vast crowds from a distance that visited Carmunnock in their early days at the sacrament season. They came on the Saturday—found lodgings in the village or neighbouring farm-houses—in the evening the families resorted in groups to the braes and the fields adjacent for their household devotion, and they described how solemnizing it was to hear the evening song of praise ascending to God from the scattered multitudes. But long ere I was settled all that had passed away. Few came to unite with us in the sacred service, and none came from a distance. The open air worship was still kept up, but those who assembled with the professed purpose of joining in it were too often heedless and disorderly, because no longer restrained by the presence of the multitude of devout and serious persons, so that there were some cases of excess and riot occasionally among the young. The position of the parish so near Glasgow, and in the neighbourhood of many populous villages and public works, peculiarly exposed us to the evil results which too often arise from promiscuous assemblages at all times. We had no resource, therefore, but to discontinue the field worship, and I believe that the vast majority, if not the whole of our country parishes, owned the necessity of the change. Still some of the more aged worthies were sad at heart, because they remembered the glory of former days, which now was the more manifest than in the case of the gifted and devout lady to whom I have already referred in former communications.[1] The neighbouring parishes soon fol-

[1] Lady Stuart of Castlemilk.

lowed our example, and now the old Scottish communion Sabbath is, so far as the Lowlands are concerned, only a reminiscence. Still, when we look back to these religious solemnities, let us honour the wisdom and piety of our forefathers in the arrangements they made for trying times; let us remember that the churchyards of our land, where the Word of God was preached, were embalmed in the memory of many a Scotsman as the spots where they drew the first spiritual breath, and first tasted the pleasures of devotion, and let no man henceforth, who has any claim to a christian character, speak of the old Scottish communion Sabbath as a "Holy Fair."'

There is no class of men which stands out more prominent in the Reminiscences of the last hundred years than that of our SCOTTISH JUDGES. They form, in many instances, a type or representative of the leading *peculiarities* of Scottish life and manners. They are mixed up with all our affairs, social and political. There are to be found in the annals of the bench rich examples of pure Scottish humour, the strongest peculiarity of Scottish phraseology, acuteness of intellect, cutting wit, eccentricity of manners, and abundant powers of conviviality. Their successors no longer furnish the same anecdotes of oddity or of intemperance. The Courts of the Scottish Parliament house, without lacking the learning or the law of those who sat there sixty years ago, lack not the refinement and the dignity that have long distinguished the Courts of Westminster Hall.

Stories still exist, traditionary in society, amongst its older members, regarding Lords Gardenstone, Monboddo, Hermand, Newton, Polkemmet, Braxfield, etc. But many younger persons do not know them. It may be interesting to some of my readers to devote a few pages on the subject, and to offer some judicial gleanings.[1]

[1] I have derived some information from a curious book, Kay's *Portraits*, 2 vols. The work is scarcely known in England, and is becoming

Of Lord Gardenstone (Francis Garden) I have many early *personal* reminiscences, as his property of Johnstone was in the Howe of the Mearns, not far from Fasque. He was a man of energy, and promoted improvements in the county with skill and practical sagacity. His favourite scheme was to establish a flourishing town upon his property, and he spared no pains or expense in promoting the importance of his village of Laurencekirk. He built an excellent inn, to render it a stage for posting. He built and endowed an Episcopal chapel for the benefit of his English immigrants, in the vestry of which he placed a most respectable library, and he encouraged manufacturers of all kinds to settle in the place. Amongst others a *hatter* came to reconnoitre, and ascertain its capabilities for exercising his calling. But when, on going to public worship on Sunday after his arrival, he found only *three* hats in the kirk, viz. the minister's, Lord Gardenstone's and his own—the rest of the congregation all wearing the old flat Lowland bonnet—he soon went off, convinced that Laurencekirk was no place for hatters to thrive in. He was much taken up with his hotel or inn, and for which he provided a large volume for receiving the written contributions of travellers who frequented it. It was the landlady's business to present this volume to the guests and ask them to write in it, during the evenings, whatever occurred to their memory or their imagination. In the mornings it was a favourite amusement of Lord Gardenstone to look it over. I recollect Sir Walter Scott being much taken with this contrivance, and his asking me about it at Abbotsford. His son said to him, 'You should establish such a book, sir, at Melrose;' upon which Sir W. replied 'No, Walter, I should just have to see a great deal of abuse of my-

scarce in Scotland. 'Nothing can be more valuable in the way of engraved portraits than these representations of the distinguished men who adorned Edinburgh in the latter part of the 18th century.'—*Chambers.*

self.' On his son deprecating such a result, and on his observing my surprised look, he answered, 'Well, well, I should have to read a great deal of foolish praise, which is much the same thing.' There is another lingering reminiscence which I retain connected with the inn at Laurencekirk. The landlord, Mr Cream, was a man well known throughout all the county, and was distinguished, in his late years, as one of the few men who continued to wear a *pigtail*. On one occasion the late Lord Dunmore (grandfather or great-grandfather of the present peer), who also still wore his queue, halted for a night at Laurencekirk. On the host leaving the room, where he had come to take orders for supper, Lord Dunmore turned to his valet and said, 'Johnstone, do I look as like a fool in my pigtail as Billy Cream does?' 'Much about it, my lord,' was the valet's imperturbable answer. 'Then,' said his lordship, 'cut off mine tomorrow morning when I dress.'

Lord Gardenstone seemed to have had two favourite tastes: he indulged in the love of pigs and the love of snuff. He took a young pig as a pet, and it became quite tame, and followed him about like a dog. At first the animal shared his bed, but when growing up to advanced swinehood, it became unfit for such companionship, he had it to sleep in his room, in which he made a comfortable couch for it of his own clothes. His snuff he kept not in a box, but in a leathern waistpocket made for the purpose. He took it in enormous quantities, and used to say that if he had a dozen noses he would feed them all. Lord Gardenstone died 1793.

Lord Monboddo (James Burnett, Esq., of Monboddo) is another of the well-known members of the Scottish Bench who combined, with many eccentricities of opinion and habits, great learning and a most amiable disposition. From his paternal property being in the county of Kincardine, and Lord M. being a visitor at my father's house, and indeed a relation of clansmen, I have many early reminiscences of stories which I have

heard of the learned judge. His speculations regarding the origin of the human race have, in times past, excited much interest and amusement. His theory was, that man emerged from a wild and savage condition, much resembling that of apes; that man had then a tail like other animals, but which, by progressive civilization and the constant habit of *sitting*, had become obsolete. This theory produced many a joke from facetious and superficial people, who had never read any of the arguments of an elaborate work, by which the ingenious and learned author maintained his theory.[1] Lord Kames, a brother judge, had a hit at it. On some occasion of their meeting, Lord Monboddo was for giving Lord Kames the precedency. Lord K. declined, and drew back, saying, 'By no means, my lord; you must walk first that I may *see your tail.*' I recollect Lord Monboddo's coming to dine at Fasque caused a great excitement of interest and curiosity. I was in the nursery, too young to take part in the investigations; but my elder brothers were on the alert to watch his arrival, and get a glimpse of his tail. Lord M. was really a learned man, read Greek and Latin authors—not as a mere exercise of classical scholarship, but because he identified himself with their philosophical opinions, and would have revived Greek customs and modes of life. He used to give suppers after the manner of the ancients, and used to astonish his guests by the ancient cookery of Spartan broth, and of *mulsum*. He was an enthusiastical Platonist. On a visit to Oxford he was received with great respect by the scholars of the University, who were much interested in meeting with one who had studied Plato, as a pupil and follower. In accordance with the old custom at learned universities, Lord Monboddo was determined to address the Oxonians in Latin, which he spoke with much readiness. But they could not stand the numerous attacks upon the head of Priscian. Lord Monboddo shocked the ears of the men of Eton and of Winchester by dreadful false

[1] *Origin and Progress of Language.*

quantities—verse-making being, in Scotland, then quite neglected, and a matter little thought of by the learned judge.

Lord Monboddo was considered an able lawyer, and on many occasions exhibited a very clear and correct judicial discernment of intricate cases. It was one of his peculiarities that he never sat on the bench with his brother judges, but always at the clerk's table. Different reasons for this practice have been given, but the simple fact seems to have been, that he was deaf, and heard better at the lower seat. His mode of travelling was on horseback. He scorned carriages, on the ground of its being unmanly to 'sit in a box drawn by brutes.' When he went to London he rode the whole way. At the same period, the late Mr Barclay of Ury (father of the late laird), when he represented Kincardineshire in Parliament, always *walked* to London. He was a very powerful man, and could walk fifty miles a day, his usual refreshment on the road being a bottle of port wine, poured into a bowl, and drunk off at a draught. I have heard that George III. was much interested at these performances, and said, 'I ought to be proud of my Scottish subjects, when my judges *ride*, and my members of Parliament *walk* to the metropolis.'

On one occasion of his being in London, Lord Monboddo attended a trial in the Court of King's Bench. A cry was heard that the roof of the court-room was giving way, upon which judges, lawyers, and people made a rush to get to the door. Lord Monboddo viewed the scene from his corner with much composure. Being deaf and short-sighted, he knew nothing of the cause of the tumult. The alarm proved a false one; and on being asked why he had not bestirred himself to escape like the rest, he coolly answered that he supposed it was an *annual ceremony* with which, as an alien to the English laws, he had no concern, but which he considered it interesting to witness as a remnant of antiquity. Lord Monboddo died 1799.

Lord Rockville (the Hon. Alexander Gordon, third son of the Earl of Aberdeen) was a judge distinguished in his day by his ability and decorum. 'He adorned the bench by the dignified manliness of his appearance, and polished urbanity of his manners.'[1] Like most lawyers of his time, he took his glass freely, and a whimsical account which he gave, before he was advanced to the bench, of his having fallen upon his face, after making too free with the bottle, was commonly current at the time. Upon his appearing rather late at a convivial club with a most rueful expression of countenance, and on being asked what was the matter, he exclaimed with great solemnity: 'Gentlemen, I have just met with the most extraordinary adventure that ever occurred to a human being. As I was walking along the Grassmarket, all of a sudden *the street rose up and struck me on the face.*' He had, however, a more serious *encounter* with the street after he was a judge. In 1792, his foot slipped as he was going to the Parliament House, he broke his leg, was taken home, fevered and died.

Lord Braxfield (Robert M'Queen of Braxfield) was one of the judges of the old school, well known in his day, and might be said to possess all the qualities united, by which the class were remarkable. He spoke the broadest Scotch. He was a sound and laborious lawyer. He was fond of a glass of good claret, and had a great fund of good Scotch humour. He rose to the dignity of Justice-Clerk, and, in consequence, presided at many important political criminal trials about the year 1793–4, such as those of Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Margarot, Gerrold, etc. He conducted these trials with much ability and great firmness, occasionally, no doubt, with more appearance of severity and personal prejudice than is usual with the judges who in later times are called on to preside on similar occasions. The disturbed temper of the times and the daring spirit of the political offenders seemed, he thought, to call for a bold and fearless front

[1] Douglas' *Peerage*, vol. i. p. 22.

on the part of the judge, and Braxfield was the man to show it, both on the bench and in common life. He met, however, sometimes with a spirit as bold as his own from the prisoners before him. When Skirving was on trial for sedition he thought Braxfield was threatening him, and by gesture endeavouring to intimidate him; accordingly, he boldly addressed the bench: 'It is altogether unavailing for your Lordship to menace me, for I have long learnt to fear not the face of man.' I have observed that he adhered to the *broadest* Scottish dialect. 'Hae ye ony coonsel, man?' he said to Maurice Margarot (who, I believe, was an Englishman). 'No,' was the reply. 'Div ye want to hae ony appinted?' 'No,' replied Margarot; 'I only want an *interpreter* to make me understand what your Lordship says.' Braxfield had much humour, and enjoyed wit in others. He was immensely delighted at a reply by Dr M'Cubbin, the minister of Bothwell. Braxfield, when Justice-Clerk, was dining at Lord Douglas', and observed there was only port upon the table. In his usual off-hand brusque manner, he demanded of the noble host if 'there was nae claret i' the castle.' 'Yes,' said Lord Douglas; 'but my butler tells me it is not good.' 'Let's pree't,' said Braxfield, in his favourite dialect. A bottle was produced, and declared by all present to be quite excellent. 'Noo, minister,' said the old judge, addressing Dr M'Cubbin, who was celebrated as a wit in his day, 'as a *fama clamosa* has gone forth against this wine, I propose that you *absolve* it'—playing upon the terms made use of in the Scottish Church Courts. 'Ay, my Lord,' said the minister, 'you are first-rate authority for a case of civil or criminal law, but you do not quite understand our Church Court practice. We never absolve *till after three several appearances.*' The wit and the condition of absolution were alike relished by the judge. Lord Braxfield closed a long and useful life in 1799.

Of Lord Hermand we have spoken on several occa-

sions, and his name has become in some manner identified with that conviviality which marked almost as a characteristic the Scottish bench of his time. He gained, however, great distinction as a judge, and was a capital lawyer. When at the bar, Lords Newton and Hermand were great friends, and many were the convivial meetings they enjoyed together. But Lord Hermand outlived all his old last-century contemporaries, and formed with Lord Balgray what we may consider the connecting links between the past and the present race of Scottish lawyers.

We could scarcely perhaps offer a more marked difference between habits *once* tolerated on the bench and those which now distinguish the august seat of senators of justice than by quoting, from Kay's *Portraits*, vol. ii. p. 278, a sally of Lord Balmuto (Claud Boswell), which he played off, when sitting as judge, upon a young friend whom he was determined to frighten. 'On one occasion, a young counsel was addressing him on some not very important point that had arisen in the division of a common (or commonty, according to law phraseology), when, having made some bold averment, Balmuto exclaimed, "That's a lee, Jemmie." "My lord!" ejaculated the amazed barrister. "Ay, ay, Jemmie; I see by your face ye're leein'." "Indeed, my lord, I am not." "Dinna tell me that; it's no in your memorial (brief)—awa wi' you;" and, overcome with astonishment and vexation, the discomfited barrister left the bar. Lord Balmuto thereupon chuckled with infinite delight; and beckoning to the clerk who attended on the occasion, he said, "Are ye no Rabbie H——'s man?" "Yes, my lord." "Was na Jemmie —— leein'?" "Oh no, my lord." "Ye're quite sure?" "Oh yes." "Then just write out what you want, and I'll sign it; my faith, but I made Jemmie stare." So the decision was dictated by the clerk, and duly signed by the judge, who left the bench highly diverted with the fright he had given his young friend.'

Such scenes enacted in Court *now* would astonish the present generation, both of lawyers and of suitors.

These references to peculiarities and eccentricities in Scottish judges may not unsuitably form an introduction to the mention of a Court of Session *jeu d'esprit*, which was well known and popular in its day, but which may not be so familiar to some of my younger readers. It is generally believed to be the production of the late accomplished Lord Corehouse (George Cranstoun), and is considered a happy burlesque upon the manner and professional peculiarities of several of the judges already mentioned. The editor of Kay's *Portraits* well observes that it is in caricature, but entirely without rancour or any feeling of a malevolent nature towards those whom he represents as giving judgment in the 'Diamond Beetle case.' The involved phraseology of Lord Bannatyne—the predilection for Latin quotation of Lord Meadowbank—the brisk manner of Lord Hermand—the anti-Gallic feeling of Lord Craig—the broad dialect of Lords Polkemmet and Balmuto—and the hesitating manner of Lord Methven, are admirably caricatured: [1]

Notes taken at advising the Action of Defamation and Damages, Alexander Cunningham, Jeweller in Edinburgh, against James Russell, Surgeon there.

LORD PRESIDENT (SIR ILAY CAMPBELL): Your Lordships have the petition of Alexander Cunningham against Lord Bannatyne's interlocutor. It is a case of defamation and damages for calling the petitioner's *Diamond Beetle* an *Egyptian Louse*. You have the Lord Ordinary's distinct interlocutor on pages 29 and 30 of this petition: 'Having considered the Condescendence of the pursuer, Answers for the defender,' and so on, 'Finds, in respect that it is not alleged that the diamonds on the back of the Diamond Beetle are real diamonds, or anything but shining spots, such as are found on other Diamond Beetles, which likewise occur, though in a smaller number, on a great number of other Beetles, somewhat different from the Beetle libelled, and similar to which there may be Beetles in Egypt, with shining spots on their backs, which may be termed Lice there, and may be different not only from the common Louse, but from the Louse mentioned by

[1] The version which I have given of this amusing burlesque has been revised by Mr Pagan, Cupar-Fife, and corrected from his own manuscript copy, which he had procured from authentic sources about forty years ago.

Moses as one of the plagues of Egypt, which is admitted to be a filthy troublesome Louse, even worse than the said Louse, which is clearly different from the Louse libelled. But that the other Louse is the same with, or similar to, the said Beetle, which is also the same with the other Beetle; and although different from the said Beetle libelled, yet, as the said Beetle is similar to the other Beetle, and the said Louse to the said other Louse libelled; and the other Louse to the other Beetle, which is the same with, or similar to, the Beetle, which somewhat resembles the Beetle libelled; assoilzies the defender, and finds expenses due.'

Say away, my Lords.

LORD MEADOWBANK: This is a very intricate and puzzling question, my Lord. I have formed no decided opinion; but at present I am rather inclined to think the interlocutor is right, though not upon the *ratio* assigned in it. It appears to me that there are two points for consideration: *First*, Whether the words libelled amount to a *convicium* against the Beetle; and, *Secondly*, Admitting the *convicium*, whether the pursuer is entitled to found upon it in this action. Now, my Lords, if there be a *convicium* at all, it consists in the *comparatio* or comparison of the *Scarabæus* or Beetle with the Egyptian *Pediculus* or *Louse*. My first doubt regards this point, but it is not at all founded on what the defender alleges, that there is no such animal as an Egyptian *Pediculus* or *Louse* in *rerum natura;* for though it does not *actually* exist, it may *possibly* exist (if not in *actio*, yet in *potentia*, if not in actuality, yet in potentiality or capacity); and whether its existence be in *esse vel posse*, is the same thing to this question, provided there be *termini habiles* for ascertaining what it would be if it did exist. But my doubt is here. How am I to discover what are the *essentia* of any Louse, whether Egyptian or not? It is very easy to describe its accidents as a naturalist would do—to say that it belongs to the tribe of *aptera* (or that it is a yellow, little, greedy, filthy, despicable reptile); but we do not learn from this what the *proprium* of the animal is in a logical sense, and still less what its *differentia* are. Now, without these, it is impossible to judge whether there is a *convicium* or not; for, in a case of this kind, which *sequitur naturam delicti*, we must take them *meliori sensu*, and presume the *comparatio* to be in *melioribus tantum*. And here I beg that parties, and the bar in general—[interrupted by Lord Hermand, *Your Lordship should address yourself to the Chair*]—I say—I beg it may be understood that I do not rest my opinion on the ground that *veritas convicii excusat*. I am clear that although this Beetle actually were an Egyptian Louse, it would afford no relevant defence, provided the calling it so were a *convicium;* and there my doubt lies.

With regard to the second point, I am satisfied that the *Scarabæus* or Beetle itself has no *persona standi in judicio;* and therefore the pursuer cannot insist in the name of the *Scarabæus*, or for his behoof. If the action lie at all, it must be at the instance of the pursuer himself, as the *verus dominus* of the *Scarabæus*, for being calumniated through the *convicium* directed primarily against the animal standing in that relation to him. Now, abstracting from the qualification of an actual *dominium*, which is not alleged, I have great doubts whether a mere *convicium* is necessarily transmitted from one object to another, through the relation of a *dominium* subsisting between them; and, if not neces-

sarily transmissible, we must see the principle of its actual transmission here; and that has not yet been pointed out.

LORD HERMAND: We heard a little ago, my Lord, that there is a difficulty in this case; but I have not been fortunate enough, for my part, to find out where the difficulty lies. Will any man presume to tell me that a Beetle is not a Beetle, and that a Louse is not a Louse? I never saw the petitioner's Beetle; and what's more, I don't care whether I ever see it or not, but I suppose it's like other Beetles, and that's enough for me.

But, my Lord, I know the other reptile well. I have seen them, I have felt them, my Lord, ever since I was a child in my mother's arms; and my mind tells me that nothing but the deepest and blackest malice rankling in the human breast could have suggested this comparison, or led any man to form a thought so injurious and insulting. But, my Lord, there's more here than all that—a great deal more. One could have thought the defender would have gratified his spite to the full by comparing the Beetle to a common Louse—an animal sufficiently vile and abominable for the purpose of defamation [*Shut that door there*]; but he adds the epithet *Egyptian*, and I know well what he means by that epithet. He means, my Lord, a Louse that has been fattened on the head of a *Gipsy or Tinker* undisturbed by the comb or nail, and unmolested in the enjoyment of its native filth. He means a Louse grown to its full size, ten times larger, and ten times more abominable than those with which *your Lordships and I are familiar*. The petitioner asks redress for the injury so atrocious and so aggravated; and, as far as my voice goes, he shall not ask it in vain.

LORD CRAIG: I am of the opinion last delivered. It appears to me to be slanderous and calumnious to compare a Diamond Beetle to the filthy and mischievous animal libelled. By an Egyptian Louse, I understand one which has been formed on the head of a native Egyptian—a race of men who, after degenerating for many centuries, have sunk at last into the abyss of depravity, in consequence of having been subjugated for a time by the French. I do not find that Turgot, or Condorcet, or the rest of the economists, ever reckoned the combing of the head a species of productive labour; and I conclude, therefore, that wherever French principles have been propagated, *Lice* grow to an immoderate size, especially in a warm climate like that of Egypt. I shall only add, that we ought to be sensible of the blessings we enjoy under a free and happy Constitution, where Lice and men live under the restraint of equal laws—the only equality that can exist in a well-regulated state.

LORD POLKEMMET: It should be observed, my Lord, that what is called a Beetle is a reptile very well known in this country. I have seen mony ane o' them in Drumshorlin Muir; it is a little black beastie, about the size of my thoom nail. The country folks ca' them Clocks; and, I believe, they ca' them also Maggy-wi'-the-mony-feet; but they are not the least like any Louse that ever I saw; so that, in my opinion, though the defender may have made a blunder through ignorance, in comparing them, there does not seem to have been any *animus injuriandi*; therefore I am for refusing the petition, my Lords.

LORD BALMUTO: 'Aum[1] for refusing the petition. There's more

[1] His Lordship usually pronounced *I am—Aum.*

Lice than Beetles in Fife. They ca' them Clocks there. What they ca' a Beetle is a thing as lang as my arm; thick at the one end and sma' at the other. I thought, when I read the petition, that the Beetle or Bittle had been the thing that the women have when they are washing towels or napery with—things for dadding them with; and I see the petitioner is a jeweller till his trade; and I thought he had ane o' thae Beetles, and set it all round with diamonds; and I thought it a foolish and extravagant idea; and I saw no resemblance it could have to a Louse. But I find I was mistaken, my Lord; and I find it only a Beetle-clock the petitioner has; but my opinion's the same it was before. I say, my Lords, 'Aum for refusing the petition, I say——

Lord Woodhouselee: There is a case abridged in the third volume of the Dictionary of Decisions, Chalmers *v.* Douglas, in which it was found, that *veritas convicii excusat*, which may be rendered not literally, but in a free and spirited manner, according to the most approved principles of translation, 'the truth of calumny affords a relevant defence.' If, therefore, it be the law of Scotland (which I am clearly of opinion it is), that the truth of the calumny affords a relevant defence—and if it be likewise true, that the Diamond Beetle is really an Egyptian Louse—I am inclined to conclude (though certainly the case is attended with difficulty) that the defender ought to be assoilzied.—*Refuse.*

Lord Justice Clerk (Rae): I am very well acquainted with the defender in this action, and have respect for him—and esteem him likewise. I know him to be a skilful and expert surgeon, and also a good man; and I would do a great deal to serve him or to be of use to him, if I had it in my power to do so. But I think on this occasion he has spoken rashly, and I fear foolishly and improperly. I hope he had no bad intention—I am sure he had not. But the petitioner (for whom I have likewise a great respect, because I knew his father, who was a very respectable baker in Edinburgh, and supplied my family with bread, and very good bread it was, and for which his accounts were regularly discharged), it seems has a Clock or Beetle, I think it is called a Diamond Beetle, which he is very fond of, and has a fancy for, and the defender has compared it to a Louse, or a Bug, or a Flea, or a worse thing of that kind, with a view to render it despicable or ridiculous, and the petitioner so likewise, as the proprietor or owner thereof. It is said that this is a Louse *in fact*, and that the *veritas convicii excusat*; and mention is made of a decision in the case of Chalmers *v.* Douglas. I have always had a great veneration for the decisions of your Lordships; and I am sure will always continue to have while I sit here; but that case was determined by a very small majority, and I have heard your Lordships mention it on various occasions, and you have always desiderated the propriety of it, and I think have departed from it in some instances. I remember the circumstances of the case well;—Helen Chalmers lived in Musselburgh, and the defender, Mrs Douglas, lived in Fisherrow; and at that time there was much intercourse between the genteel inhabitants of Fisherrow, and Musselburgh, and Inveresk, and likewise Newbigging; and there were balls, or dances, or assemblies, every fortnight or oftener, and also sometimes I believe every week; and there were card-parties, assemblies once a fortnight, or oftener; and the young people danced there also, and others played at

cards, and there were various refreshments, such as tea and coffee, and butter and bread, and I believe, but I am not sure, porter and negus, and likewise small beer. And it was at one of these assemblies that Mrs Douglas called Mrs Chalmers very improper names. And Mrs Chalmers brought an action of defamation before the Commissaries, and it came by advocation into this Court, and your Lordships allowed a proof of the *veritas convicii*, and it lasted a very long time, and in the end answered no good purpose even to the defender herself, while it did much hurt to the pursuer's character. I am therefore for REFUSING such a proof in this case; and I think the petitioner in this case and his Beetle have been slandered, and the petition ought to be seen.

LORD METHVEN: If I understand this a—a—a—interlocutor, it is not said that the a—a—a—a—Egyptian Lice are Beetles, but that they may be, or—a—a—a—a—resemble Beetles. I am therefore for sending the process to the Ordinary to ascertain the fact, as I think it depends upon that whether there be a—a—a—a—*convicium* or not. I think also the petitioner should be ordained to a—a—a—produce his Beetle, and the defender an Egyptian Louse or *Pediculus*, and if he has not one, that he should take a diligence a—a—a—against havers to recover Lice of various kinds; and these may be remitted to Dr Monro, or Mr Playfair, or to some other naturalist, to report upon the subject.

Agreed to.

The remaining articles in this volume being of a miscellaneous character, partly anecdote and partly historical, are inserted without much regard to method or arrangement.

As it has all along formed part of my object to record reminiscences of practices and customs recently become obsolete with us, I avail myself of some communications bearing upon this subject. The first is from a valued friend, the Rev. W. Gillespie, U.P. minister of Mary's Chapel, High Street, from whom and from whose excellent lady I have many interesting communications.

Being in company lately with some foreign gentlemen from widely different parts of the world, the United States, Russia, India, etc., the conversation turned on slavery. And the curious fact was mentioned by Professor —— that a kind of serfdom actually existed in Scotland, in respect of farm-servants and colliers, up to a very recent date; hinds on farms being regarded as a sort of *adscripti glebæ*, a trace of the system being found in the use of the old term '*bondagers*,' as applied to them in some parts of the country to this day: and colliers

working in mines and born on the soil being actually considered and treated as slaves within the memory of men now living; and finally, that there are living men in the country who were once slaves. Now for the story. A man now living at Dixon's large collieries and iron-works near Glasgow, but whose native place was Fife, from whence he had been transferred twenty years before to the west, was asked why he had been sent to Glasgow. 'Oh,' he said with great simplicity, 'my master niffered me for a powny.'[1]

The second communication of this kind is from a Musselburgh correspondent, an eye-witness, whose reminiscences extend back for seventy years, and which describe what we trust is now an obsolete custom.

I stand from 1780, and the scenes witnessed and described as under, took place in 1786–90, consequently very few are now living to authenticate my story. At the period stated there was a provident benefit society of carters formed for the relief of their sick and indisposed members (and which it is believed still exists and thriving), and it was their practice on the head quarter in midsummer for the whole body to have a holiday, and which was designated in common parlance The Carter's or Whipman's Play, and was looked forward to with much anxiety by all.

On all such occasions it was the custom for each of the members to appear mounted on his best nag, saddled and bridled, well curried, and decorated, head, mane, and tail, more or less with ribbons. The principal himself, in his best suit—a large broad bonnet, stitched all over with ribbons of every colour, and obtained for the day from wife, sweetheart, or neighbour, and broad sash of same materials; also, when mounted, suspended at his left wrist, a wooden mallet, with a handle about thirty

[1] Since this anecdote was in print, I find the fact fully corroborated by the authority of Mr R. Chambers (*Domestic Annals*, vol. iii. p. 250). The restraints upon the personal freedom of salters and colliers, remains of the *villainage* of the middle ages, were not put an end to till 1775, when a statute (15 Geo. III., 26) extinguished them.

inches long, the purpose of which will be explained after. The place of rendezvous of the troop having been agreed on—generally a few miles in the country, having the advantage of a barn or such like accommodation, for lunching, drinking, or dancing, and a good public house at no great distance—to which locality the whole party make off in procession, with colours flaunting, horses curvetting, and all in the best possible glee for a day's fun. That which at the time the writer witnessed was at the village of Nether Liberton, about two miles south of Edinburgh, then a large thriving populous place, where, upon a spot selected for the purpose, were erected two firm posts, stuck in the ground at about ten or twelve feet distance, a good height, and bound at top with a cross beam, thus forming a kind of arch. Midway on the cross beam hung by a rope of about three feet long, suspended by the bung-hole, a barrel or firkin of about two feet long in size. If it is asked, What of this barrel, to which all eyes are turned up, and such mighty preparations directed for?—could any one of the present day be made to believe that the members of such a society could originate, and that thousands of citizens of all classes could witness with the greatest delight, the cruel torture of a poor animal—as in this said barrel was coopered up a live cat, with a large quantity of soot?

The method of torture, or eliciting the fun, as it was termed, was in this manner—viz. each mounted clown was required to march in procession under the archway, and on passing to strike with his mallet the end of the suspended barrel, which, if missed, was a *fine of sixpence*. The first stroke on the barrel of course sent it swinging considerably from the perpendicular; hence the difficulty of the next trooper to plant his hit (as it was required to *keep moving*); also, if he did hit, not to do so with too much vigour, lest he should stave the barrel, and thereby have the cat and soot down upon him and his horse—the great point of the tomfoolery of

the day. Consequently the *fun* was in watching the alternate hitting and missing of each trooper as he advances and passes, which he has many times to do, returning to the charge in a circle, and lasting probably for an hour, till the last stroke causes the descent of poor puss and the soot on the *luckless clown* of the day.

The minor amusements were a race for probably a saddle, or so many horseshoes; also, one or more foot races for small sums, and then an adjournment to the barn to demolish their store of cold lamb, beef, and mutton pies, with lots of ale, whisky, and punch; then dancing and revelry till a late hour, thus spending a day that could not be properly designated *holy*, and which marks very strikingly the contrast of feeling and action of even the lowest classes of the present day.

The following is a curious example of a style of Scottish newspaper notices of marriages, now passed away, and in which the fortune and charms of the bride were more specifically registered than is done at present. It is from a very interesting collection of antiquarian gleanings from Aberdeenshire records, published in 1859, by Gavin Turreff, 46 High Street, Old Aberdeen, and was kindly communicated by Mr Turreff himself:

'Last Thursday, Sitton Cryr was married in this town to Miss Bell Forbes, daughter to the Hon. Sir Alexander Forbes of Foveran, a young lady of great beauty and possessed of all the amiable virtues that can render happy the nuptial state.'—*Aberdeen Journal*, 1750.

'Yesternight was married here Mr Walter Cochran, depute town-clerk, to Miss Nelly Udny, daughter to James Udny, advocate, a young lady of distinguished merit and virtue.'—*Ibid.*, 1750.

'Last Tuesday, Alex. Aberdein of Cairnbulg, late provost of this city, was married at Montrose to Miss Nelly Carnegie, sister to Sir James Carnegie of Pitarrow, a young lady of celebrated beauty and distinguished merit.'—*Ibid.*, 1750.

'On Wednesday last, James Cumming of Breda, Esq.,

was married to Miss Vera Chalmers, a most agreeable young lady, daughter to Provost Wm. Chalmers.'—*Ibid.*, 1748.

'We hear from London that George Turner of Wateridgemuir, sheriff-clerk for the county of Aberdeen, was last week married at St Michael's, Cornhill, to Miss Peggy Cattanach of Aberdeen, a lady endowed with every amiable qualification.'—*Ibid.*, 1749.

'By a private letter from London, we learn that Robert Udny, merchant there, son to Mr James Udny, advocate in this place, was married at Oxford on the 13th curt. to Miss Hougham, an agreeable young lady with a fortune of £6000.'—*Ibid.*, 1749.

'Same day was married Thomas Forbes of Tillienaught, Esq., to Miss Christian Cumming, eldest daughter of George Cumming, Esq., of Pitullie, a most beautiful and agreeable young lady.'—*Ibid.*, 1757.

'Last Sunday night was married Dr Alex. Rose, physician in this city, to Miss Nelly Middleton, daughter to the late Captain Alex. Middleton, comptroller of the customs at this port, and niece to Brigadier-General John Middleton of Seaton, a young lady of distinguished beauty and superlative merit.'—*Ibid.*, 1755.

The following might have been added as examples of the dry humorous manner in which our countrymen and countrywomen sometimes treat matters with which they have to deal, even when serious ones:

An itinerant vendor of wood in Aberdeen having been asked how his wife was, replied, 'O she's fine, I hae ta'en her tae Banchory;' and, on it being innocently remarked that the change of air would do her good, he looked up, and with a half smile said, 'Hoot, she's i' the kirkyard.'

The well-known aversion of the Scotch to hearing *read* sermons has often led to amusing occurrences. One indulged pastor in a country district was permitted so far to transgress the rule, as to be allowed notes, which never in number exceeded three, and which of course

were:—'1st, 2nd, thirdly, and lastly.' One Sabbath afternoon, having exhausted both firstly and secondly, he came to the termination of his discourse; but, unfortunately, the manuscript was awanting. In vain efforts to seek the missing paper, he repeated 'thirdly and lastly' *ad nauseam* to his hearers. At last one, cooler than the others, rose and, nodding to the minister, observed 'Deed, sir, if I'm no mista'en, I sā "thirdly and lastly" fā oūr the poopit stairs.'

A man who had had four wives, and who meditated a fifth time entering the marriage state, was conversing with his friend on the subject, who was rather disposed to banter him a little upon his past matrimonial schemes, as having made a good deal of *money* by his wives: 'Na, na,' he replied, 'they cam' t' me wi' auld kists,[1] and I sent them hame i' new anes.'

The two following are from a correspondent who heard them told by the late Dr Barclay the anatomist, to whom reference has been made, p. 186 of this volume:

A country laird, at his death, left his property in equal shares to his two sons, who continued to live very amicably together for many years. At length one said to the other: 'Tam, we're getting auld now, you'll tak' a wife, and when I dee you'll get my share o' the grund.' 'Na, John, you're the youngest and maist active, you'll tak' a wife, and when I dee you'll get my share.' 'Od,' says John, 'Tam, that's just the way wi' you whan there's ony *fash or trouble.* The deevil a thing you'll do at a'.'

A country clergyman, who was not on the most friendly terms with one of his heritors who resided in Stirling, and annoyed the minister by delay in paying the teinds, found it necessary to make him understand that his proportion of stipend must be paid so soon as it became due. The heritor sent it next term punctual to the time. When the messenger was introduced to the minister, he asked who he was, remarking that he

[1] Chests.

thought he had seen him before. 'I am the hangman of Stirling, sir.' 'Oh, just so, take a seat till I write you a receipt.' It was evident that the laird had chosen this medium of communication with the minister as an affront, and to show his spite. The minister, however, turned the tables upon him, sending back an acknowledgment for the payment in these terms: 'Received from Mr ——, by the hands of the hangman of Stirling, *his doer*,[1] the sum of,' etc. etc.

The following story of pulpit criticism, by a beadle, used to be told, I am assured, by the late Rev. Dr Andrew Thomson:

A clergyman in the country had a stranger preaching for him one day, and meeting his beadle, he said to him, 'Well, Saunders, how did you like the sermon to-day?' 'I watna', sir, it was rather ower plain and simple for me. I like thae sermons best that jumbles the joodgement and confoonds the sense. Od, sir, I never saw ane that could come up to yoursel' at that.'

The epithet 'canny' has frequently been applied to our countrymen, not in a severe or invidious spirit, but as indicating a due regard to personal interest and safety. In the larger edition of Jamieson (see edition of 1840) I find there are no fewer than eighteen meanings given of this word. The following extract from a provincial paper, which has been sent me, will furnish a good illustration. It is headed, the 'PROPERTY QUALIFICATION,' and goes on: 'Give a Chartist a large estate and a copious supply of ready money, and you make a Conservative of him. He can then see the other side of the moon, which he could never see before. Once, a determined Radical in Scotland, named Davy Armstrong, left his native village; and, many years afterwards, an old fellow-grumbler met him, and commenced the old song. Davy shook his head. His friend was astonished, and soon perceived that Davy was no longer

[1] In Scotland it is usual to term the law-agent or man of business of any party his 'doer.'

a grumbler but a rank Tory. Wondering at the change, he was desirous of knowing the reason. Davy quietly and laconically replied: "I've a coo (cow) noo."'

But even still more 'canny' was the eye to the main chance in an Aberdonian fellow-countryman, communicated in the following pleasant terms from a Nairn correspondent: 'I have just been reading your delightful *Reminiscences*, which has brought to my recollection a story I used to hear my father tell. It was thus: A countryman in a remote part of Aberdeenshire having got a newly-coined sovereign, in the days when such a thing was seldom seen in his part of the country, went about showing it to his friends and neighbours for the charge of 1*d.* each sight. Evil days, however, unfortunately overtook him, and he was obliged to part with his loved coin. Soon after, a neighbour called on him, and asked a sight of his sovereign, at the same time tendering a penny. "Ah, man," says he, "I haen't noo; but I'll lat ye see *the cloutie it was row't in* for a bawbee."'

I have often been amused with the wonderful coolness with which a parishioner announced his canny care for his supposed interests when he became an elder of the kirk. The story is told of a man who had got himself installed in the eldership, and, in consequence, had for some time carried round the ladle for the collections. He had accepted the office of elder because some wag had made him believe that the remuneration was sixpence each Sunday, with a boll of meal at New Year's day. When the time arrived he claimed his meal, but was told he had been hoaxed. 'It may be sae wi' the meal,' he said coolly, 'but I took care o' the saxpence mysel'.'

There was a good deal both of the *pawky* and the *canny* in the following anecdote, which I have from an honoured lady of the south of Scotland: 'There was an old man who always rode a donkey to his work, and tethered him while he worked on the roads, or wherever

else it might be. It was suggested to him by my grandfather that he was suspected of putting it in to feed in the fields at other people's expense. "Eh, laird, I could never be tempted to do that; for my cuddy winna eat onything but nettles and thistles." One day my grandfather was riding along the road, when he saw Andrew Leslie at work, and his donkey up to the knees in one of his clover fields, feeding luxuriously. "Hollo! Andrew," said he; "I thought you told me your cuddy would eat nothing but nettles and thistles." "Ay," said he, "but he misbehaved the day; he nearly kicket me ower his head, sae I pat him in there just to *punish* him."'

The following, from a provincial paper, contains a very amusing recognition of a return which one of the itinerant race considered himself conscientiously bound to make to his clerical patron for an alms: 'A beggar while on his rounds one day this week, called on a clergyman (within two and a half miles of the Cross of Kilmarnock), who, obeying the Biblical injunction of clothing the naked, offered the beggar an old topcoat. It was immediately rolled up, and the beggar, in going away with it under his arm, thoughtfully (!) remarked, "I'll hae tae gie ye a day's *hearin'* for this na."'

The 'crack i' the kirkyard' (see page 38). There is another story which shows that a greater importance might be attached to this privilege than was done even by the servant lass mentioned above. A rather rough subject, residing in Galloway, used to attend church regularly, as it appeared, for the *sake* of the crack in the churchyard. For on being taken to task for his absenting himself, he remarked, 'There's nae need to gang to the kirk noo, for everybody gets a newspaper.'

The natural and self-complacent manner in which the following anecdote brings out in the Highlander an innate sense of the superiority of Celtic blood is highly characteristic: A few years ago, when an English family were visiting in the Highlands, their attention was

directed to a child crying; on their observing to the mother it was *cross*, she exclaimed, 'Na, na, it's nae cross, for we're baith true Hieland.'

The following is a good Jacobite story. It must have happened shortly after 1745, when all manner of devices, not dangerous, were fallen upon to show Jacobitism, such as having white knots on gowns, drinking 'The king, ye ken wha I mean'—uttering the toast 'the king' with much apparent loyalty, and passing the glass on the side of the water-jug from them, indicating the esoteric meaning of majesty *beyond* the sea, etc. etc.; and various toasts, which were most important matters in those times, and were often given as tests of loyalty, or the reverse, according to the company in which they were given. Miss Carnegy of Craigo, well known and still remembered amongst the old Montrose ladies as an uncompromising Jacobite, had been vowing that she would drink King James and his son in a company of staunch Brunswickers, and being strongly dissuaded from any such foolish and dangerous attempt by some of her friends present, she answered them with a text of Scripture, 'The tongue no man can tame—James *Third* and *Aucht*,' and drank off her glass!

The late Mr Grame of Garsock, in Strathearn, whose grandson already 'is laird himsel,' used to tell, with great *unction*, some thirty years ago, a story of a neighbour of his own of a still earlier generation, Drummond of Keltie, who, as it seems, had employed an itinerant tailor instead of a metropolitan artist. On one occasion when a new pair of inexpressibles had been made for the laird, they were so tight that, after waxing hot and red in the attempt to try them on, he *let out* rather savagely at the tailor, who calmly assured him, 'It's the fash'n; it's jist the fash'n.' 'Eh? ye haveril, is it the fashion for them *no to go on?*'

An English gentleman writes to me: 'We have all heard much of Scotch caution, and I met once with an instance of it which I think is worth recording, and

which I tell as strictly original. About 1827 I fell into conversation on board of a Stirling steamer with a well-dressed middle-aged man who told me he was a soldier of the 42nd going on leave. He began to relate the campaigns he had gone through, and mentioned having been at the siege of St Sebastian. "Ah! under Sir Thomas Graham?" "Yes, sir; he commanded there." "Well," I said, merely by way of carrying on the *crack*, "and what do you think of *him?*" Instead of answering, he scanned me several times from head to foot, and from foot to head, and then said in a tone of the most diplomatic caution: "Ye'll perhaps be of the name of Grah'm yersell, sir." There could hardly be a better example either of the circumspection of a real canny Scot, or of the lingering influence of the old patriarchal feeling by which "A name, a word, makes clansmen vassals to their lord."'

The following account of a Scottish dinner party seems to harmonize with the sturdy character of the gentlemen of the older generation. When Sir Robert Preston was eighty years old, Chief Commissioner Adam seventy, Lord Melville and the Lord President Charles Hope sixty, and Lord Meadowbank nearly fifty, they all met at Granton to eat a dinner of entirely Scotch dishes. Every variety that their memories could supply was cooked in every possible way. It was very successful on the whole, but something was wrong about the cockie-leekie, and they agreed to meet again for a repetition of the dinner in two or three weeks, which they did; and at that dinner they all agreed that if they were spared till that day *ten years*, they would have another Scotch dinner, same party, same place. And strange to say, in this world of changes, one of the party being by that time past fourscore and ten, another fourscore, and two threescore and ten, they *all did meet* in health and strength; and a sort of half proposal was made to repeat the dinner after another decade was passed. The company did not, however, formally take

up the challenge, feeling that it would, humanly speaking, be impossible that one of the guests, Sir R. Preston, could be alive, then to come. He died soon after, and so did Chief Commissioner Adam. But this circumstance was remembered—and all the other guests did assemble on the third decade and ate exactly the same Scotch dinner as they had done twenty years before.

In the *present* Volunteer movement we record with pleasure an anecdote concerning the *old* Volunteers in the beginning of the century, and which we think not unworthy of being recorded. It was related by the father of my correspondent, who held a commission in the first Regiment Glasgow Volunteers. This regiment had scarcely been raised when its services were required in a somewhat trying emergency—the mutiny of a regiment of Highland Fencibles, then in the barracks, which had taken offence at being ordered abroad, or for some other cause. The Highlanders were posted on one side of George Square and the Volunteers on the other; and their lines were so extended that the conversation of two Highlanders was overheard, running to the following effect: 'Donald,' said one, 'I dinna think thae lads would stan' us.' 'I dinna ken, Angus,' was the reply; 'they're shentlemen, an' they wudna rin.' The idea is strikingly Celtic, but admirably hits the truth.

I have not had leisure to pursue, as I had intended, a further consideration of SCOTTISH DIALECT and their differences from each other in the north, south, east, and west of Scotland. I merely remark, now that the dialect of one district is considered quite barbarous, and laughed at by the inhabitants of another district where a different form of language is adopted. I have spoken (p. 60) of the essential difference between Aberdeen and southern Scotch. An English gentleman had been visiting the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and accompanied him to Aberdeen. His lordship of Edinburgh introduced his English friend to the Provost of Aberdeen, and they both attended a great dinner given by the

latter. After grace had been said, the Provost kindly and hospitably addressed the company Aberdonicé: 'Now, gentlemen, fah tee, fah tee.' The Englishman whispered to his friend and asked what was meant by 'fah tee, fah tee;' to which his lordship replied, 'Hout, he canna speak—he means fau too, fau too.' Thus one Scotticism was held in terror by those who used a different Scotticism, as at Inveraray the wife of the chief writer of the place, seeking to secure her guest from the taint of inferior society, intimated to him, but somewhat confidentially, that Mrs W. (the rival writer's wife) was quite a vulgar body, so much so as to ask any one leaving the room to '*snib* the door,' instead of bidding them, as she triumphantly observed, '*sneck* the door.'

Any of my readers not much conversant with Aberdeen dialect will find the following a good specimen: A lady who resided in Aberdeen being on a visit to some friends in the country, joined an excursion on horseback. Not being much of an equestrian, she was mounted upon a Highland pony as being the *canniest baste*. He, however, had a trick of standing still in crossing a burn. A burn had to be crossed—the rest of the party passed on, while 'Paddy' remained, pretending to drink. Miss More, in great desperation, called out to one of her friends: 'Bell, 'oman, turn back an gie me yer bit fuppie, for the breet's stannin' i' the peel wi' ma.'

The following is a *historical* reminiscence, which has been communicated as a traditionary account of an interesting period, and deserves to be recorded:

It is well known, writes my correspondent, that the individual referred to in *Waverley* by the Prince as a friend who had volunteered to lead his followers across the moss at Preston to attack the royal troops, was a gentleman of the name of Anderson, who, his father being then alive, was known at the time, and for many subsequent years, as 'the young laird o' Whitbury.' This property, situated in the south part of East Lothian, is still in the possession of a collateral descendant of

the family. Mr Anderson, though for some time in prison after the suppression of the rebellion, was so fortunate as to be liberated without being brought to trial, the authorities, no doubt, being ignorant of the part he had acted on that memorable occasion. The anecdote I am about to mention connected with him, though not as a political character, is chiefly interesting in regard to the individual it principally refers to, as what so very few, out of the many millions then and since existing, could state as a circumstance that had happened to themselves. An old lady came, or rather was brought, on one occasion, to visit him at Whitbury, who, in the course of their conversation, said 'Noo, Mr Anderson, hoo lang do you think it is since I was last in this hoose? Just aughty-twa years!' 'Aweel, madam,' was the humorous answer of the laird, 'I hope ye'll no be sae lang o' comin' back again.' What makes the circumstance remarkable is, that the first of the two visits paid, with so long an interval between them, and which was of course in his father's time, was not made when she was a child, but after she had come to woman's estate. The old lady in question was a Mrs Wilson of Peaston, also in East Lothian, an aunt of Sir John Rennie, the celebrated engineer. What her age was at the time of the second visit I do not remember hearing, but she died when in her 101st year, and, like most centenarians, with all her faculties perfect to the last. When she put the question to her host, he also must have attained a venerable age, being between eighty and ninety when he died, but up to that time always known and spoken of as 'the young laird o' Whitbury.'

I have the greatest pleasure in closing these *Reminiscences* with a curious account of some particulars connected with the eccentric marriage of the Duke of Douglas, and with a well-known and very extraordinary incident of his grace's history. The account is extracted from a diary of John Brown of Waterhaughs, Ayrshire;

there is also a supplement to the extract from the diary, being a communication by Mr Thomas Brown of Lanfine and Waterhaughs. I am indebted to Lord Ardmillan for these very interesting documents. His lordship, in addition to many acts of courtesy and kindness, has done me the honour of placing them entirely at my disposal:

February 28, 1758. Miss Peggie Douglas, a daughter of the family of Mains, set out for Douglas Castle, and was married that night or the next to the Duke of Douglas. She had only a lady of her acquaintance from Glasgow along with her, Miss Peter Craufurd.

The Duke for a long time had been reputed to be of a very savage and cruel disposition. He killed a friend of his own, Captain Kerr, when he was his guest, and lodging in the castle of Douglas. He used his sister Lady Jane very badly while she remained with him; and after she had left him, at the latter end of her days, he even let her almost perish for want of bread. His natural disposition was much inflamed by the practices of a gentleman, one Mr White of Stockbrigs, who, it was said, gave him bad impressions of all his friends, and almost all the people he had business with. White so managed the Duke that no person was admitted to him without his knowledge, and no affair was transacted without his directions, so that it might be justly said that the Duke of Douglas saw with Stockbrigs' eyes, and heard with his ears. In this way the Duke managed till Stockbrigs died. After that period the Duke saw more company. He discoursed calmly and freely, and was found by the generality of people not to be that frightful and terrible person he was represented to be, for time and experience had softened his temper, and the person who stirred him up being dead he became quite a different man.

The way Miss Douglas became introduced to him is thus: She had a nephew, John Douglas, who was made a lieutenant in one of the American regiments; his

friends advised him to get himself introduced to his Chief, as the way to have himself quickly raised in the army. But before the lad had time to practise the advice, he was called to join his regiment.

Thomas Hamilton of Overton, or some other gentleman, told the Duke of the young gentleman's intention of waiting on his grace, and mentioned, by the by, that he had a bouncing, frolicsome clever woman for his aunty. The Duke said he would have been glad to have seen the lad, and he would have been more acceptable had he brought his aunt along with him.

Miss Douglas was told of this conversation, who immediately rigged herself up, and set out for the Castle of Douglas, to interest the Duke in favour of her young nephew. On her intending to visit the Duke, she wrote to Overton to meet her at Douglas, and to introduce her. The letter, it seems, miscarried, for when she came to Douglas, Overton was not there. The Duke being informed that Miss Douglas was there, sent and invited her to the Castle. When he saw her, he was so much taken with her frank easy behaviour, and the turn of her humour, that she became a powerful advocate for her nephew. She used great freedom, and told him, among a number of things, sincerely, that his grace seemed to want two things to complete his happiness—a Duchess and a young Marquis.

The next day after she had made her visit to the Duke, he sent a servant to her mother's house in the Gallowgate of Glasgow, telling her he had sent her a piece of plate, a silver tray, with his arms engraved on it, which he begged she would accept, and that she would favour him with another visit. He also told her he had sent three letters to peruse, to Lord Loudoun, Sir John Ligonier, and Lord Morton, and if there was anything he could say more in favour of her nephew he would alter the letters according to her directions.

She went and visited him a few days after that, and lodged in the Castle two nights, where there had not

been a woman for upwards of thirty years, except servants. It seems the marriage was agreed on at this interview; for from the time the Duke first saw her he certainly was much in love with her; but, after this visit to the time she went to Douglas for altogether, was taken up in continual messages and preparations. On February 27, the night before she set out for Douglas, a present of a silver cup, and a quantity of fine wine, came from the Duke to Lady Mains, and a letter, begging her to drink her daughter's and his health with the wine in that cup.

On February 28 she and Miss Craufurd set out for Douglas Castle, attended by four of the Duke's principal servants. She was received at the Castle by the Duke in the kindest manner, and next day was married by Mr Hamilton, the minister of Douglas, before several witnesses. The Duke is aged sixty-three, and the Duchess forty-four.

Miss Douglas, now Duchess of Douglas, is a well-looking, sensible, clever woman, extremely generous, and a fast friend. Friendship for her nephew first set her on the scheme of visiting a man who by all the world was reckoned a woman-hater and next to mad. Her success with such a man sets her address in a very strange light. She was remarkable for her frolics, though the most of them were good-natured. It is believed she will make the Duke happier; and from the ascendance it is natural she will have over him, she will have opportunity of doing much good. The estate is reckoned £11,000 per annum, besides a considerable sum of money. The Duke has behaved gallantly and honourably in this affair. Pains were used to give him bad impressions of Miss Douglas, and several anonymous letters were dropped for that purpose full of calumny. He enclosed one of the worst of them to her, saying he hoped she would consider them in the same light as he did; that it was the envy and malice of the world, and below his regard.

November 1758. The Castle of Douglas was burned this month, and a great many valuable things destroyed, but no lives lost, although the fire broke out at four of the clock in the morning, when all the family were in bed. The Duke and Duchess have now taken up their residence in the Palace of Holyrood House.

March 1759. The Duke of Douglas left his Duchess at Holyrood House, and went to the Marquis of Lothian's, where she followed him. The Duke ordered her to leave the house, which she refused, and was carried to her coach by force. The ground of the quarrel is said to be that Lady Jane, his sister, was supported by the Duchess in her determination that Archibald Douglas, her reputed son, should be made his heir. He was persuaded that he really was *not* her son; therefore, all along, the Duke has shown the greatest aversion to that proposal.

Then follows the supplement to this extract by Mr Thomas Brown:

Mr Hamilton, the son of the minister of Douglas, when upwards of ninety, told me that when a boy he was intimate with the Duke of Douglas, and was residing with him when the Earl of Perth came to Douglas Castle with the Pretender against the Duke's will. The Duke continually refused to comply with Lord Perth's urgent request to see the Pretender; and on one occasion Mr Hamilton saw him kick Lord Perth on the shins, so that blood came through the white silk stockings. Lord Perth merely said, 'You will answer this one day;' but nothing ensued. When the unwelcome guests left the castle, the Duke went to a window whence he could see them, and cried out with a loud voice, which every one heard: 'Lord Perth, Lord Perth, I see your Pretender. He plays a very poor fiddle.' This was aimed at the swollen and bandaged legs and pimpled face of the Pretender.

The Duke's adherence to the House of Hanover was

supposed to have been secured by the Government refraining from prosecuting him for the murder of Captain Kerr. The Duke had been falsely informed of a purpose of marriage between Captain Kerr and Lady Jane Douglas, which much enraged him. Kerr was on a visit at Douglas Castle, when, on parting for the night, he received from his host an affectionate salutation on each cheek. The Duke watched behind his bedroom door till he heard him snore. He then entered, ran him through with a sword, and blew out his brains with a pistol. He then took horse to the coast, and fled first to Ireland, and thence to France, where he negotiated terms with the English Government, which enabled him to return to Scotland. Captain Kerr's blood remained on the floor of the apartment of the castle, and the servants used to show it, till the Duchess, as was supposed, burnt the castle in November 1758, to get rid of the scandal.

These extracts relate to persons and events which have held a prominent place in Scottish domestic history of the last hundred years, and a few further notices and illustrations regarding them may not be unacceptable to some of my younger readers.[1]

The Miss Douglas who became Duchess of Douglas was well known in her day for her talent and eccentricity. She was a daughter of James Douglas of Mains, and we find her alluded to in Dr Carlyle's autobiography. He met her at a picnic near Hamilton, where she rallied a parish minister 'pretty roughly' (which was her way) 'upon his being an old fusty bachelor.' The quotation is given in full, as it is too good to be spoiled by abridgment. After bearing patiently all the efforts of her wit, 'Margaret,' says he, 'you know that I am master of the parish register, where your age is recorded, and that I know when you may, with justice, be called

[1] Much information regarding the family is contained in a memorial for Archibald Douglas against the Duke of Hamilton in *The Douglas Cause*, 4to, 1766.

an old maid, in spite of your juvenile airs.' 'What care I, Tom,' said she, 'for I have for some time renounced your worthless sex; I have sworn to be Duchess of Douglas or never to mount a marriage bed.' This happened in 1755.

The Duke of Douglas whom she married was a man of ungoverned passions and of weak intellect. After the murder of Kerr, before alluded to, and on his return from abroad, he lived in great retirement, and from that period for many years he continued to lead a solitary life in the castle of Douglas, where few people had access to him, and where he became a prey to designing and interested persons. Of these, White of Stockbrigs became his sole adviser and confidant. He appears to have had a most injurious influence. He had no doubt instigated the Duke to the murder of Kerr, and in every way was a bad companion for a weak and violent man. It was White's interest to keep the Duke's friends and relatives at a distance. Of relatives the Duke had an only sister, Lady Jane Douglas, whose name was destined to obtain great celebrity. James, Marquis of Douglas, died in 1700, leaving issue, Archibald, late Duke of Douglas, and Lady Jane Douglas, both then infants. The Duke was born in 1694, and Lady Jane in March 1698. Lady Jane was brought up by her mother, the Marchioness, in principles of the strictest piety, which she always retained. Her great beauty and accomplishments procured her universal attention, and an alliance so honourable was courted by persons of the first rank and fortune in this kingdom. An incident, however, happened at an early period in her life, which is now unjustly taken hold of to her prejudice, though her conduct was vindicated at the time, and was indeed the effect only of high spirit and perhaps uncommon sensibility. She had been prevailed on to listen to the addresses of a nobleman of distinguished rank, who solicited her in marriage. Everything was settled by their mutual friends, and the match ready to be con-

cluded, when Lady Jane, who then happened to be in London, was surprised one day at having her chair stopped, when going to Court, by a person unknown, who delivered her a letter, wrote in the name of her supposed lover, signifying that he was under engagements to another lady, whom he had long been fond of, and without whom he could not be happy. It would have been a singular instance of philosophy in a young lady of her high fashion, and so much accustomed to admiration, had she submitted with patience to so cruel an affront. Lady Jane figured to herself that an adventure of this kind would soon be in the mouths of the world, and that she would be exposed to ridicule and contempt. Full of this idea she resolved to abandon for ever a country in which she imagined she could no longer pass her days with comfort; and having set out privately, and in disguise, in order to prevent discovery, attended only by her maid, who was a Frenchwoman, she went over to France, with a determined purpose of shutting herself up in a convent. Her mother, the Marchioness, soon followed, and came up with her before her intentions were fully completed. The Duke, after avenging the insult which had been offered to his family, by fighting the supposed author of it,[1] went also to France in quest of his sister, and prevailed with her to forget what had happened, and to return to her native country.

Lady Jane had often, when in favour with her brother, and subsequent to her return from abroad, as above noticed, been pressed by him to marry. Addresses were made to her by several noble Lords, but they proved ineffectual for reasons unnecessary to be mentioned. In 1746, being in the forty-seventh year of her age, she listened to the proposals of John Stewart, Esq., after-

[1] Can the following paragraph throw any light upon this transaction? (London, March 29, 1720, Sunday Evening. The Duke of Douglas and the Earl of Dalkeith fought a duel behind Montagu House, and were both wounded. Newspapers of the day.)—Quoted from Chambers' *Domestic Annals*, vol. iii.

wards Sir John Stewart of Grandtully, Baronet, and was privately married to him, at her house near Edinburgh, on August 4 that year. Sir John was possessed of no fortune at the time, though he had a considerable one in expectancy. His elder brother, Sir George, was far advanced in life, had no issue, and was in a very declining state of health. Sir John had formerly been married to a daughter of the Honourable Sir James Mackenzie of Royston, one of the Judges of the Court of Session, by whom he had a son, who became Sir John Stewart of Grandtully. On the issue of this marriage between Lady Jane Douglas and Sir John Stewart, a great question depended, viz., the succession to the whole of the Douglas property. On the death of the Duke in 1761, the dukedom of Douglas was extinct. But the Duke of Hamilton, as heir-male, succeeded to the marquisate of Douglas, and also *claimed*, as heir of line, succession to the great estates. This claim, however, to the nearest of kin, was disputed in favour of Archibald Stewart (afterwards Douglas), who was alleged to be a son of Lady Jane Douglas, and survivor of twin boys born in 1748. Hence arose one of the most celebrated trials of modern times, the DOUGLAS CAUSE, a cause which divided the opinions of the first lawyers of the day, and excited an interest throughout Europe. The circumstances were briefly as follows: The Lady Jane Douglas and her husband were residing in Paris, 1748, on the expectation of her confinement. Sir John removed her to the Faubourg St Germain, where she was attended by Pierre la Marre, a man-midwife, and gave birth to twins, one of whom died, and the survivor, Archibald, it was alleged was heir, through his mother, to the Douglas property. The Duke of Hamilton brought the case into the Scottish courts, to set aside the claim on various grounds, such as the advanced age of Lady Jane (being fifty-one), the mystery of travelling about, in her situation, from Aix-la-Chapelle to Liège, thence to Sedan, thence to Rheims, and

from Rheims to Paris; and unsatisfactory evidence in the questions whether La Marre did attend Lady Jane for childbirth.

The case was ably argued at the Scottish bar; of the fifteen judges, seven declared in favour of Archibald Douglas' claim, seven declared against it. Lord Monboddo's speech in favour was considered exceedingly lucid and able. The Lord President gave the casting vote *against* the birth. The case was appealed to the House of Lords, and the Scottish judgment was reversed in 1769, chiefly under the influence, as was supposed, of Lord Mansfield.

The King, George III., was much interested in the case, and evinced *his* opinion of it by creating Douglas a peer. The title was extinct in the late Lord Douglas, and the estates descended to his sister, Lady Montague. They are now held by her eldest daughter, the Countess of Home.

We have some notices of the Duchess *subsequent* to the death of her husband. The following passage from Mr R. Chambers' third volume of *Domestic Annals of Scotland* gives a curious account of her Grace in her latter days:

Dr Johnson, who met the Duchess as a widow at Boswell's house in 1773, speaks of her as an old lady who talked broad Scotch with a paralytic voice, and was scarcely intelligible even to her countrymen. Had the Doctor seen her ten years earlier, when she was in possession of all her faculties, he would have found how much comicality and rough wit could be expressed in broad Scotch under the coif of a Duchess. I have had the advantage of hearing it described by the late Sir James Steuart of Coltness, who was in Paris with her Grace in 1762, when she was also accompanied by a certain Laird of Boysack, and one or two other Scotch gentlemen, all bent on making the utmost of every droll or whimsical circumstance that came in their way. Certainly the language and style of ideas in which the party indulged was enough to make the hair of the *fastest* of our day stand on end. There was great humour one day about a proposal that the Duchess should go to Court, and take advantage of the privilege of the *tabouret*, or right of sitting on a low stool in the Queen's private chamber, which it was alleged she possessed, by virtue of her late husband's ancestors having enjoyed a French dukedom (Touraine) in the fifteenth century. The old lady made all sorts of excuses in her homely way; but when Boysack started

the theory, that the real objection lay in her Grace's fears as to the disproportioned size of the tabouret for the co-relative part of her figure, he was declared, amidst shouts of laughter, to have divned the true difficulty—her Grace enjoying the joke fully as much as any of them. Let this be a specimen of the mate of the last of the House of Douglas.

CONCLUSION

I THINK it is now time that I should close this collection of miscellaneous anecdotes and illustrative stories regarding Scottish habits and manners. I am quite prepared to admit that I was led to engage in the work from the deep interest I have long felt in everything Scotch; but at the same time I do not admit that I am blind to the faults of those I love; neither would I ascribe every virtue under heaven to Scotchmen, nor assert that every earthly advantage belonged to Scotland. I may not be so unwilling to admit any inferiority without a reserve, as was a countryman who, when eating grapes in the south of England, produced in the open air, and ripened only by the Kentish sun, being asked if as good grapes were produced in Scotland, readily answered 'Ay, just as gude, but then I must premeese I prefare them some *sourer*.'

We are far from upholding the perfection of our country, nor is it our office to refute all the charges which may be brought against our countrymen; our Reminiscences of Scotland will no doubt at times bring before us points of national character in which we may discern marks of moral deterioration and indications of departure from ancient simplicity of manners. We mourn over the continued prevalence, and, we fear, in some cases, the *increase* of those intemperate habits which have taken such deep root in the population both of our towns and rural districts. But then our love is not abated by sorrow for such deterioration, and we are only the more anxious to see such faults corrected. Whisky especially is the evil spirit whom we desire to see old Scotia CAST OUT. Of course, where men and

women live in crowded habitation, often with uncertain means of subsistence—and amongst whom there is a constant influx of English and Irish labourers, badly, if at all, educated, of unsettled and dissipated habits—the results will be a demoralized condition of society. But that the standard of morals in our country districts is at a lower point than the morals of English country districts, we would strenuously deny, and I am prepared to show, although this is not the place, that certain moral statistics do *not* convey an accurate comparative estimate with England—and I am well acquainted with the condition of English country parishes in these matters. No man who has a heart to feel and a mind to estimate the evils of impurity and crime, but must entertain the deepest sorrow for the sin that pervades the whole land; but, the northern standard of morals is not below the standard of the southern portion; and there are points on which we may fearlessly challenge for our countrymen a fair comparison. The agricultural districts of Scotland have never experienced the alarm which the senseless malignity of the midnight *incendiary* has at times spread through the English counties. I never heard of Scottish children being murdered for the wretched bribe of the premium paid to the parents as members of a burial club—a practice which had at one time in England amongst manufacturers become almost an organized system. In no rural district in Scotland would the scenes of rude violence and drunken revelry be witnessed on a Sabbath evening, which I have known too common in the west of England.

But there is a point of comparison between our country and our southern neighbours, now becoming a matter of history, and regarding which I think there has been considerable misapprehension—I mean the question of *religious* division. The reminiscences even of young persons can now embrace a great event, which has distinguished the religious annals of Scotland. The Established Church has been divided nearly into two equal

parts, and two-thirds of the Scottish parishes have within a period of ten years been, each of them, provided with an additional church, manse, and school-house, as if the wand of a necromancer had passed over the land and made a *second* church to spring from the earth. To effect this change, large sums of money have been raised by the party seceding from the church of their fathers, and a contribution in ten years of nearly three millions sterling has attested the sincerity and generous self-denial of the members of the Free Church of Scotland. From these circumstances our country has been referred to as in a state of frightful disunion as regards religious questions, and as exhibiting the most painful picture of division and of disorganization. No doubt there is much difference of opinion amongst us, and much acerbity of feeling, which may be traced up to unhappy disputes belonging to ecclesiastical matters. And no thoughtful mind can observe what is going on amongst us without sad and sorrowful reflection regarding these points before him, or without earnest prayer for unity and peace. But how stands the case of our religious divisions in comparison with England? I believe a great portion of the Church of England to be perfectly sound in the faith of the Reformation, at once Scriptural and Protestant. I believe England contains the purest specimen on earth of evangelical truth combined with apostolical order. But we cannot conceal from ourselves that, as a nation, England is more deeply marked by, strictly speaking, *religious* division than Scotland. Take, in the first place, the obvious division between the Church of England and the great body of Dissenters from her polity and ritual. What a separation is made in the social system by this nonconformity! In Wales, and in certain other localities, the Church of England is in a sorrowful minority. Then note the divided condition of the church itself—divisions, let it be remarked, not in opinions regarding the *externals* of religion, the forms of church government, or the connection between the civil and ecclesiastical

relations of members of that church. But the divisions are on points affecting, as we believe, the *essential doctrines* of Christianity, the method of man's acceptance and justification, the efficacy of sacraments in the work of man's salvation. Upon these and similar great fundamental questions, the Church of England is divided —we fear with little prospect of her being speedily united. There is the extreme High Church or Puseyite party; the extreme Low Church or Evangelical party; there is the *via media* Church or Moderate party; there is the Broad Church or Philosophical party. So distinct and separate are these sections of the Church of England, that in all advertisements or negotiations regarding the supply of vacancies in any situations implying cure of souls, the *party* to which the applicant belongs must be stated as distinctly as if persons had to deal with members of different communions.

But there are worse features of church division than these. No one can calmly look upon what is going on within the pale of the Church of England and not feel an apprehension as if the boundary lines between positive truth and error, between the private opinions of individuals and the doctrines propounded by the formulas of the church, were in danger of being obscured or obliterated!

In one direction we see a publication of treatises on religious questions by a layman and six clergymen of the church, of whom one holds a pastoral charge, and others hold important positions connected with the universities and high places of education, which have been thus referred to, in an answer to an address from the clergy, by the Archbishop of Canterbury and signed by all the English prelates: 'I have taken the opportunity of meeting many of my Episcopal brethren in London to lay your address before them. They unanimously agree with me in expressing the pain it has given them that any clergyman of our church should have published such opinions as those concerning which

you have addressed us. We cannot understand how their opinions can be held consistently with an honest subscription to the formularies of our church, with many of the fundamental doctrines of which they appear to us essentially at variance.'

In another direction we see the introduction of opinions and of ritual observances which many persons find great difficulty to distinguish from doctrines and practices characteristic of the Church of Rome.

Indeed such differences are with many persons now neither preserved nor acknowledged, and men are found to palter with themselves and others in a double sense —they do not join the communion of the Church of Rome, they are not faithful to the principles of the Anglican Church to which they profess still to belong. But the stealthy growing tendencies towards Rome, which have long seemed to me so obvious and insidious, have now reached their culminating point, and are avowed without concealment or disguise. The line is fairly passed, and union with Rome is openly advocated by a section of the Church of England. A periodical has taken such ground without compromise or equivocation. Opinions are there maintained which in former time would have been considered utterly incompatible with Anglican churchmanship; as, for example, the supremacy of the chair of St Peter in the Christian world; the duty of Anglican priests and laymen studying and attending mass when on the Continent; the Catholic authority for the doctrine of the immaculate conception; the duty of prayer to the Virgin Mary for her intercession and influence with her Son; observing Romish feasts and festivals, and prayers to the saints of the Romish calendar; the practising to the full extent periodical confession and absolution; a condemnation of the doctrine of justification by faith as heretical and soul-destroying; administration of the holy communion to the sick under one element; the use of crossings, of holy water, incense, hair shirts, chasubles, cope, etc. etc.

What may be the numerical estimate of the party whose feelings and opinions are represented by this periodical, I have no means of knowing, but I conclude that it must require zeal and interest to be excited in a considerable number in order to maintain a periodical at all, and it is evident in this case that conductors and contributors are not wanting. The work is not done by ignorant uninformed men. There are learning, spirit, and energy brought to bear upon the great point they advocate, which is a far closer approximation to Romish opinions and practices than have ever yet with any party prevailed within the Church of England; at any rate, its success is quite sufficient to justify the apprehension I have all along entertained, that the tendency of extreme high church opinions has been to sympathize with Romish views, and to an abandonment of what is essentially Protestant. Now, what is the state of matters in Scotland as compared with these things in England? With all our divisions and differences of opinion, we have nothing corresponding to the *Essays and Reviews*, and had such a volume appeared amongst us, written by clergymen of similar position in the country, I feel confident that public measures would have quickly been taken for a judicial condemnation of men who were violating the standards and authorities of the church to which they professed to belong. In regard to questions which affect the great and fundamental *doctrines* of our holy faith, I trust such opinions as those openly avowed by a section of the Church of England are not even *known* in Scotland, except as held by honest and consistent members of the Church of Rome. Indeed, it is very remarkable that there is in Scotland a far nearer approach to doctrinal uniformity than exists in England. The whole Presbyterian body, composed of the Established Church, the Free Church, the United Presbyterians, etc., all adopt one standard of doctrine, and, so far as I know, vary little in their interpretation of its teaching. The CONFESSION OF FAITH unites the great

mass of the Scottish population in a code of theological opinions not essentially differing from the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England. Surely, then, there need be no insuperable obstacle to a great union of Protestants in Scotland, which shall form a permanent and solid bulwark, on the one hand, against the introduction of lax opinions of the German school—on the other hand, against the encroachments of theology from the school of Rome—a Protestant community, with opinions differing, it may be in matters of detail, but all recognizing the great principles of the Reformation. The difficulties to be overcome, and the differences to be adjusted for union between the Established and Free Churches belong to points of a *civil* nature, to patronage and to state interference with matters ecclesiastical; delicate questions no doubt! but not so hopeless as questions of union on matters of doctrine and on the eucharistical theory. Of course, as an Episcopalian, I should rejoice to see all parties united in government under the rule of bishops, and in worship under such a liturgy as the prayer book. Without considering episcopacy *essential* to the constitution of a Christian church, still less to the salvation of individuals, still I do think that the pure scriptural order and devotional character of the holy faith which we profess are best called forth and more fully developed under Episcopal government and liturgical worship, and that under these church organizations have been produced the *highest*, the *purest*, and the *most loving* Christian characters. But as a Christian and as a Scotchman, I should rejoice to see the great religious bodies of Scotland now at one on points of *doctrine*, joined together in one *external communion*. I cannot help thinking that a council of twenty or twenty-five persons might be named, taken from different sections of the great body, who could devise a scheme of unity and concord. My soul so earnestly desires to see unity amongst professing Christians, that I would pray for a junction of all parties, Episcopalian,

Presbyterian, or Independent, on some broad Scripture basis which might be recognized by all. But if that is utterly hopeless, I would value unity amongst those with whom I cannot myself unite, except in love for a common Bible and a common Saviour. In whatever way Christian truth is held, and Christ is preached, 'I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.' Such was St Paul's determination, and such is mine.

I now finally take my leave of these *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character*, not because I think the subject has been exhausted, or that fresh fields of inquiry might not be opened; but having accomplished the particular object I had in view, I would now leave to others to collect further materials for elucidating the manners and habits of our grandfathers. To one at all advanced in years, the retrospect of life is but a melancholy office, and suggests many painful topics for his reflection, the changes which he marks in the world around him; the sad blanks which time has made in his own social circle, remind him very forcibly of the marked uncertainties of an earthly condition; and when, during the same period, he is called upon to notice how greatly manners, customs, and language have themselves been altered, the world in which he now lives seems scarcely the *same* world as that which he can remember. I have in this and a former volume retraced many footprints of the past, and I can truly say it is the love of my country which has induced me to dwell so long and so minutely upon certain peculiarities by which I can myself remember it to have been more marked and more distinguished than it is at present. The task, perhaps, will be called a useless one,—the labour to no good end. Why, it may be asked, retain any longer a memory of these national peculiarities? Scotland has become a portion of a great empire; she is not now a separate nation, but has become *part* of a nation more powerful and distinguished than anything recorded in her own past history. She has lost her in-

dividuality, and must be satisfied to take that integral position for evermore. It may be so; but this I humbly think offers no reason why we should forget our *former* national greatness and independence. We know that Scotland once formed a distinct kingdom from England, and as we can still point to a remnant of a Regalia which belonged to a separate and independent CROWN, memory will cling to peculiarities which still tell of a separate and independent PEOPLE. The day may come when all peculiarities of dialect, customs, and manners will be obsolete, but I trust the day will *never* come when Scotchmen will forget the high and sterling character of

> Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
> Scots wham Bruce has aften led.

Scotchmen (at least such as are worthy of the name) have always been noted for their love of country. In distant lands and under foreign skies they have felt the same emotions as those which are said to impart to the hardy Swiss the *maladie du pays*, and on St Andrew's day's celebration they have, like the scattered homeless Israelites, been ready to exclaim, 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.'

There is something quite touching in the attachment of Scotchmen to the old Scottish ways and remembrances of their early days, when awakened by Scottish associations of anniversaries, poetry, or song. No example of this feeling has ever struck me more than the story told of old Lord Lovat, which is amongst the many touching anecdotes which are traditionary of his unfortunate period. On his return from the trial at Westminster Hall, where he had been condemned to death for his adherence to the Stuart cause, he saw out of the coach window a woman selling the sweet yellow gooseberries, which recalled the associations of youth in his native country. 'Stop a minute,' cried the old scoffer, who knew his days on earth were numbered; 'stop a minute,

and gie me a ha'porth of *honey blobs*,' as if he had gone back in fond recollection to his schoolboy days in the High Street of Edinburgh, when honey blobs had been amongst the pet luxuries of his young life.

Independent of personal feelings, it must always be interesting to mark the features which distinguish one people from another, or to note the causes which are rendering those distinctions less prominent and less striking than they *once* were; and if we are destined soon to lose all indications of a national existence, let us note, ere they vanish, the lingering traces of our past individuality. We do no wrong surely in cherishing our love for Scotland, or in retaining a deep interest in all that is still left to Scotland. A Scotchman may have his pride and boast in being a countryman of those who won the fields of Agincourt and Cressy, but without losing the deeper recollection of being a descendant of those who fought at Bannockburn and Flodden. His heart will swell when he sees the great and noble of the land pass before him decorated with the blue ribbon and the garter of that ancient order of knighthood, the St George of England. But does there not spring up a warmer interest when his eye rests upon the green ribbon and the thistle badge of poor Scotland's order of St Andrew? A Scotchman may pay all due homage to the genius of a Shakspeare, a Milton, a Gibbon, and yet indulge a more home and heartfelt pride in the literary achievements of a Buchanan, a Walter Scott, and a Macaulay. Nor do religious differences quench the national feelings of a Scotchman towards the piety and the stern sincerity of Presbyterian Scotland. If an Episcopalian (ay, and a zealous, devoted Episcopalian), whilst he reveres and cherishes the memory of Cranmer, of Latimer, and Ridley—that noble band of bishops and archbishops, of laymen and clergymen, who reformed the Church of England—he can still do justice to the labours of a bold and fearless Knox, who, like Luther, had in difficult and trying times to fight

almost single-handed for the Protestant faith and Protestant Church, and of other sincere and earnest labourers in a great and all-absorbing cause. No true-hearted Scotchman, who, as an Episcopal Churchman, venerates the character of such men as Andrewes, and Ken, Taylor and Hooker of the English Church, will ever fail to pay his tribute of affection and respect to the old Scottish elder of a simpler creed, or ever cease to feel a Scotchman's national pride in the stern and unbending piety of men who maintained, at the hazard of life and property, the COVENANT which they had signed with their blood. We feel assured that such feelings and such emotions are, in their tendencies, favourable to the human character.

But we go further than this. We are disposed to say there is a *deficiency* in that mind—a *want* in that temperament and disposition, where no responsive feelings are called forth at the name of country—where no emotions of pride are awakened at a remembrance of its former triumphs and its past glories,—where no indignation attends a sense of its wrongs,—and no sorrow is poured forth for its humiliation. We have at least the authority of our own Walter Scott for this opinion. In the often-quoted passage from the *Lay*, with what energy he pours forth his contempt for one so utterly selfish! With what earnest and scornful feeling does his minstrel ask the question:

> Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself hath said,
> This is my own, my native land!
> Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd,
> As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,
> From wandering on a foreign strand!

With deep indignation does he return the answer which he thinks such a character deserves:

> If such there breathe, go, mark him well,
> For him no minstrel raptures swell;
> High though his titles, proud his name,
> Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;—
> Despite those titles, power, and pelf,
> The wretch, concentred all in self,

Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonour'd, and unsung.

Such language, it may be said, is the effusion of poetical enthusiasm; and belongs rather to the departments of fancy and imagination than to those of reason and the actual business of life. But, let it be remembered, genuine poetry will ever draw its best appeals and its most stirring inspirations from the *truths* and *realities* of human existence. Scott was a true poet; but no man took more sagacious views of life and character—no man more acutely marked the peculiarities of his fellow-creatures and fellow-countrymen. In this case his language is in accordance with experience. He touches upon patriotism as a virtue and excellence of our nature, and as leading men to what is good.

Love of country must, in this way, naturally tend to make men cherish a desire for its welfare and improvement. To claim kindred with the honourable and high-minded, as in some degree allied with them, must imply at least an *appreciation* of great and good qualities. Whatever supplies men with a motive for following upright and noble conduct—whatever advances in them a kindly spirit of benevolence towards fellow-creatures in distress—whatever promotes an increasing spirit of charity and forbearance towards sincere and earnest Christians of a creed differing from their own—whatever stimulates men to enrich their country by institutions favourable to the cultivation of science, literature, art, and social economy, of moral and religious instruction—*must* have a beneficial effect upon the hearts and intellects of a Christian people; and these objects are, I think, all more or less fostered and encouraged under the influence of that patriotic spirit which identifies national honour and national distinction with its own.

THE END.

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